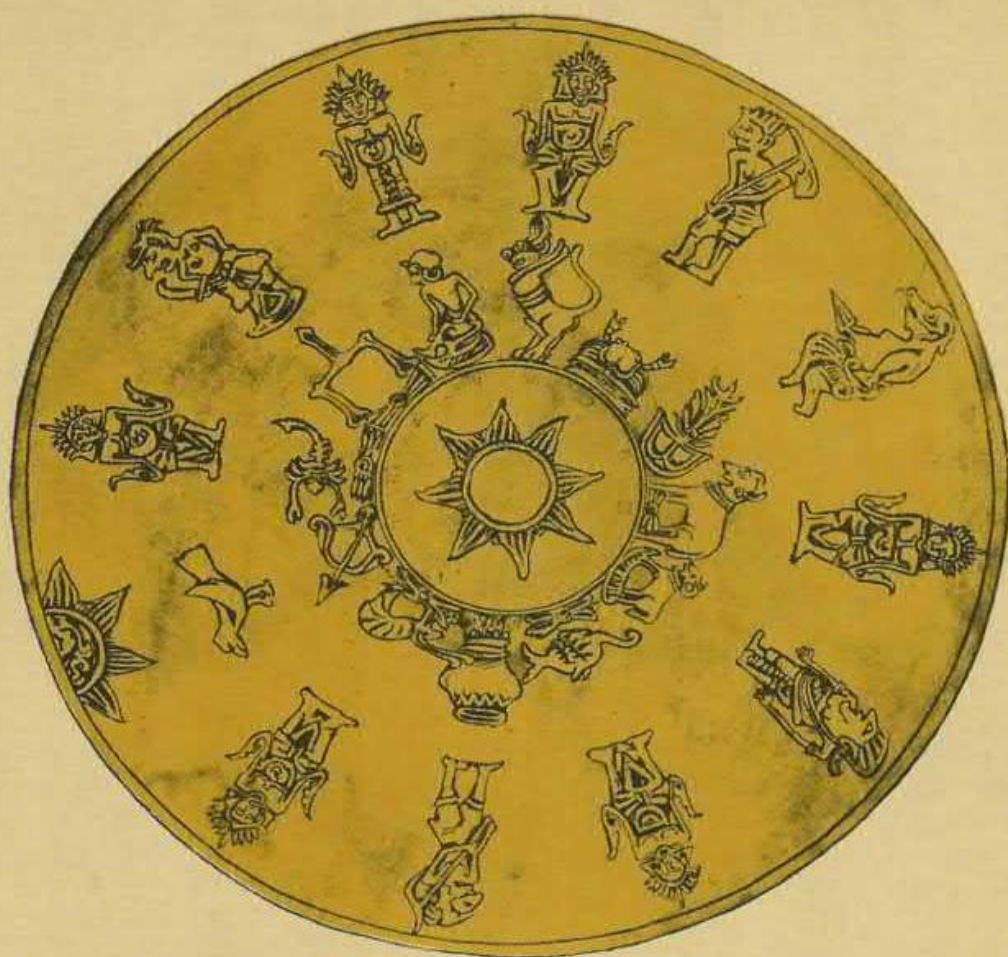




Perceptions of the Past in Southeast Asia

edited by
Anthony Reid and David Marr

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No. 4 PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

edited by
ANTHONY REID
and
DAVID MARR

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PREFACE

This book is intended to contribute as much to the intellectual history of Southeast Asia as to its historiography. The idea germinated at the beginning of 1975, in the realization of a few people then at the Australian National University that much had changed since previous attempts to examine Southeast Asian historiography. In particular the previous decade had witnessed a growing concern to approach Southeast Asian sources in their own terms rather than on the basis of their utility to the modern historian. We wanted to explore how and why Southeast Asians had written about their past, not only in the era of the early chronicles but also during the past century and a half for which Western sources abound. For this reason we determined to limit our attention to indigenous writing. With a few exceptions we have even excluded those Southeast Asians who wrote in Western languages, on the grounds that most of them wrote as much for an international as for a domestic audience. The bibliography, similarly restricted to indigenous writing, is intended to provide a schematic guide to some major sections of Southeast Asian historical writing.

Rather than restricting our task, this limitation only served to emphasize its complexity. The historians we wished to approach included, for example, Vietnamese Confucian scholars writing in Chinese, Buddhist monks writing in Thai, Muslims writing in Malay, and Marxists writing in modern Indonesian and Vietnamese, not to mention the ubiquitous bearers of oral tradition in its many forms. Only a collective effort, bringing together many of the new generation of scholars trained to work with indigenous materials, could do partial justice to the task. Although we were proud to note the number of such scholars now within reach in Australia, we could not have undertaken the task without the cooperation of a number of historians in the region itself.

Since we contributors to this volume were ourselves trained in Western (or Western-style) Universities, we are especially conscious of the contrasts between Southeast Asian modes of approaching the past and modern Western ones. We agreed, for example, that the distant past is more likely to be immediately relevant in Southeast Asia, and that greater emphasis must be placed on oral communication and tradition in view of the relatively sacral and remote character of much of the written word. There is much in this volume, however, which students of other parts of the world, including Europe, will find familiar and relevant. Some of these themes may be universal; others have impinged directly on Southeast Asia as a result of its many contacts with China, India, the Islamic World and Europe.

Despite the diversity of languages and cultural modes in which Southeast Asians wrote about the past, the participants in this enterprise have been constantly aware of the advantages of approaching Southeast Asia as a whole. When most of them came together at a Canberra colloquium in February 1976, every paper provoked echoes and responses among those who dealt with other

Southeast Asian cultures. This interplay served to emphasize the coherence of Southeast Asia as a field for study. The layers of cultural influence in the region as a whole — indigenous-animistic, Indian, Islamic or Buddhist, Chinese, European-colonial, Marxist, etc. — are frequently replicated within each individual culture, so that the whole illuminates the part. The tension between what Craig Reynolds calls 'the myth of a fresh start and the myth of continuity', between the potency of the hero figure and the impersonal forces which govern history, between the centrality of the ruler and his frequent defeat at foreign hands, between national identity and international 'orthodoxy' — these are problems which continually recur in all the articles. We have sought to retain for the reader the excitement of this interaction between papers by grouping them under headings which emphasize a few of the many themes they have in common.

The concern of this volume with six centuries of historical writing has made it possible to see not only the continuities in Southeast Asian approaches but also the important moments of change. We have seen time and again that societies faced with fundamental and inescapable choices look at their past with particular urgency and insight, as a key to charting the future. This is as true of the eighteenth century Balambangan chronicler as of the nationalists of the nineteenth century Philippines or twentieth century Vietnam; as true of Munshi Abdullah and Raja Ali Haji facing a transformed Malay world in the nineteenth century as of Jit Pumisak bringing a Marxist explanation to Thai dilemmas in the twentieth. Where on the other hand future options close, through foreign domination or internal orthodoxy, historical writing too is apt to become repetitious, evasive, or even despairing, as Anderson describes Ronggowarsito's last work.

The project has been a team effort in every way, and many have contributed to its fruition. In the first place we must acknowledge Leonard Andaya, Barbara Watson Andaya, Reynaldo Ileto and Andrew Gunawan, who were part of the 'home team' which planned the enterprise and organized the colloquium. Abdurrahman Surjomihardjo, Benjamin Batson, Peter Worsley, Robert Taylor, Ian Proudfoot and John Legge contributed their ideas directly to the colloquium with results more fruitful than can easily be acknowledged here. The Lee Foundation and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs generously met the costs of some of the Southeast Asian participants. In the editing of the final manuscript A.L. Basham, Carrie Steffen, and Jennifer Brewster have given indispensable support in a hundred ways, while Leona Jorgensen composer-typed the text. Hans Gunther drew the unusually difficult maps. Finally we thank all the contributors from whom we have learned so much. To coordinate their abundant insights has sometimes been difficult, occasionally impossible, but always exciting and rewarding.

In romanizing Asian languages we have adopted the practice currently favoured by the country in question. It has unfortunately not been possible to include diacritical marks except in the bibliographical appendix and the glossary.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BEFEO</i>	<i>Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient</i>
<i>BKI</i>	<i>Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde</i>
<i>BSEI</i>	<i>Bulletin de la Société des Études Indochinoises</i>
<i>BSOAS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies</i>
<i>FEQ</i>	<i>Far Eastern Quarterly</i>
<i>JAOS</i>	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>
<i>JAS</i>	<i>Journal of Asian Studies</i>
<i>JBRs</i>	<i>Journal of the Burma Research Society</i>
<i>JIAEA</i>	<i>Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia</i>
<i>JMBRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JOSA</i>	<i>Journal of the Oriental Society of Australia</i>
<i>JSBRAS</i>	<i>Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society</i>
<i>JSEAH</i>	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian History</i>
<i>JSEAS</i>	<i>Journal of Southeast Asian Studies</i>
<i>JSS</i>	<i>Journal of the Siam Society</i>
<i>Lor</i>	Leiden University Oriental Manuscript
<i>M</i>	<i>The Book of Mencius</i>
<i>O.U.P.</i>	Oxford University Press
<i>RASGBI</i>	The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland
<i>TBB</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor het Binnenlandsch Bestuur</i>
<i>TBG</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor Indische Taal-, Land-, en Volkenkunde</i>
<i>TNI</i>	<i>Tijdschrift voor Nederlandsch-Indië</i>
<i>TT</i>	<i>Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư</i>
<i>U.P.</i>	University Press
<i>VBG</i>	Verhandelingen van het Bataviaasch Genootschap
<i>VKI</i>	Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde (van Nederlandsch-Indië)
<i>VOC</i>	Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie

GLOSSARY

Languages are indicated in brackets as follows: A – Arabic; B – Balinese; Bu – Bugis; D – Dutch; I – Indonesian; J – Javanese; K – Khmer; M – Malay; Mk – Makassarese; P – Pali; R – Rotinese; S – Sanskrit; Sp – Spanish; Tag – Tagalog; Th – Thai; V – Vietnamese.

<i>adab</i> (M)	cultured behaviour
<i>adat</i> (I/M), <i>ada'</i> (Mk), <i>adě'</i> (Bu)	customary law, customs and norms
<i>agama</i> (I/M)	religion
<i>ajar</i> (J)	teachers and practitioners (of the old religious disciplines)
<i>akal</i> (M), <i>'akal</i> (Mk)	understanding, intelligence
<i>asal</i> (J/I/M)	origins
<i>awa</i> (Tag)	God's mercy
<i>awit</i> (Tag)	metrical poetry
<i>babad</i> (J)	history, chronicle
<i>bangsawatar</i> (K)	chronicle
<i>bantahan</i> (M)	contentiousness, arrogance, stubbornness
<i>barangay</i> (Tag)	canoe or boat; village
<i>barrio</i> (Sp)	ward, hamlet
<i>batin</i> (J/I)	inner self, interior
<i>bini</i> (R)	poems, chants
<i>Binnenlandsch Bestuur</i> (D)	administrative corps of Netherlands India
<i>bupati</i> (J)	representative of the king, local governor
<i>cerita</i> (M)	story
<i>cula</i> (P)	small, minor
<i>damay</i> (Tag)	empathy, participation
<i>darma</i> (I)	duty
<i>daulat</i> (M)	divine aura, sovereignty
<i>dhamma</i> (P), <i>dharma</i> (S)	religion, truth; virtue; essence, 'ultimate constituent' or 'atom'; law; doctrine
<i>dhyana</i> (S)	meditation, mental concentration; used of a Mahayana Buddhist school
<i>fitnah</i> (M)	mixture of propaganda, malicious gossip and defamation

<i>gamelan</i> (J/I)	Javanese orchestra
<i>gezaghebber</i> (D)	local VOC authority-holder
<i>gusti</i> (J)	lord
<i>Hadith</i> (A)	tradition about the Prophet Muhammad
<i>haj</i> (A/I/M)	pilgrimage
<i>hawa nafsu</i> (M)	lusts, desires
<i>hibik</i> (Tag)	lament
<i>hikayat</i> (M)	story, chronicle
<i>hiya</i> (Tag)	sense of shame
<i>'ilmu</i> (A/M/Mk)	knowledge, especially of traditional type
<i>ilustrado</i> (Sp)	Filipino with higher education, especially graduate of European university
<i>indio</i> (Sp)	Indian; term used by Spanish of the Filipinos
<i>kali-yuga</i> (S)	dark age
<i>kawula</i> (J)	servant
<i>kerajaan</i> (M)	government
<i>keramat</i> (I/M)	sacred; magically potent
<i>keris</i> (M/J/I)	kris, dagger
<i>kesadaran</i> (I)	awareness
<i>kolot</i> (I)	backward, old-fashioned
<i>kraton</i> (J)	palace complex, court, kingdom
<i>kumpeni</i> (M/J)	Dutch East-India Company, the Dutch
<i>kundiman</i> (Tag)	love song
<i>lahir</i> (J/I)	exterior, corporeal; birth
<i>layaw</i> (Tag)	comfortable, carefree upbringing
<i>lelakon</i> (I)	appointed course in life
<i>lo'ob</i> (Tag)	inner self
<i>maju</i> (M/I)	progressive
<i>malu</i> (M/I)	ashamed, humility
<i>manek</i> (R)	ruler of domain
<i>masa sekarang</i> (M/I)	the present

<i>masih bodoh</i> (M/I)	still ignorant
<i>mate siri'</i> (Mk)	self-respect
<i>membesarkan diri</i> (M/I)	aggrandize oneself
<i>muda</i> (M/I)	young
<i>nasib</i> (A/I)	chance, fate, lot
<i>nho</i> (V)	non-Buddhist scholar, classicist
<i>nôm</i> (V)	demotic script
<i>nusantara</i> (J)	other islands; in modern Indonesian, the Indonesian archipelago
<i>pacce</i> (Mk), <i>pěsse</i> (Bu)	poignancy, empathy
<i>pahlawan</i> (J/I)	warrior, hero
<i>pamrih</i> (J/I)	personal advantage
<i>panakawan</i> (J)	servant/clowns of the <i>wayang</i> tradition
<i>patih</i> (J)	principal minister of the ruler
<i>penglipur lara</i> (M)	soother-away of cares, story-teller
<i>pendapa</i> (J), <i>pendopo</i> (I)	reception hall
<i>pesantren</i> (J/I)	Muslim religious school
<i>phongsāwadān</i> (Th)	chronicle
<i>phrurātchaphongsāwadān</i> (Th)	royal chronicle
<i>prawatsāt</i> (Th)	history
<i>principalia</i> (Sp)	gentry class
<i>priyayi</i> (J)	office-holding nobility, Javanese elite
<i>puputan</i> (B)	mass suicide
<i>qadi</i> (A/M)	Islamic judge
<i>quôc-ngữ</i> (V)	romanized script
<i>raja</i> (S/M/K/I)	king
<i>rajabangsavatar</i> (K)	palace chronicle
<i>rakyat</i> (M/I)	the people
<i>rusak</i> (B)	destruction, ruin; title of class of Balinese historical narratives recounting the conquest of the principalities by the Dutch. See also <i>uug</i> .
<i>sadar</i> (M/I)	conscious, aware
<i>salasilah, silsilah</i> (M)	genealogy

<i>sangha</i> (P/Th/K)	Buddhist monkhood
<i>sare</i> (Mk), <i>were</i> (Bu)	to give; fate, destiny
<i>satriya</i> (J)	knight (S. <i>ksatria</i>)
<i>sejarah</i> (M/I)	history
<i>sekolah(an)</i> (M/I)	school(ing)
<i>Sendenhan</i> (Japanese)	propaganda service
<i>siri'</i> (Mk/Bu)	shame; self-esteem; self-respect
<i>suku</i> (I)	ethnic group
<i>Sunan, Susuhunan</i> (J)	ruler of Surakarta
<i>sya'ir</i> (M)	verse story, poem
<i>tamṇān</i> (Th)	story, (Buddhist) legend
<i>taqdīr</i> (A), <i>takdir</i> (M/I), <i>taka'dere'</i> (Mk)	fate, God's will
<i>tarikāt</i> (M)	Islamic mystical brotherhoods
<i>tarikh, tawarikh</i> (A/M)	history
<i>tebe, teë</i> (R)	true, real, actual
<i>tua</i> (M/I)	old
<i>tumenggung</i> (J/M)	official title, usually of one holding military rank
<i>turunan</i> (J/I)	descendant
<i>tutuik</i> (R)	tales
<i>tutui teteëk</i> (R)	true tales, historical narratives
<i>ulama</i> (A/M/I/J)	Islamic religious teachers
<i>utama</i> (I), <i>utomo</i> (J)	perfected, excellent
<i>utang</i> (Tag)	debt obligations
<i>utang na lo'ob</i> (Tag)	debt of gratitude
<i>uug</i> (B)	destruction, annihilation; title of class of Balinese historical narratives recounting the conquest of the principalities by the Dutch. See also <i>rusak</i> .
<i>wat</i> (K/Th)	Buddhist temple
<i>wayang</i> (J/I)	theatre, especially the puppet theatre, <i>wayang kulit</i>

<i>wedana</i> (J/I)	official title; in modern usage a district official
<i>zaman</i> (M/I)	period, era
<i>zaman dahulu</i> (M/I)	former times
<i>zaman kuno</i> (I)	olden times
<i>zaman yang baka</i> (M/I)	eternal time
<i>zaman yang fana</i> (M/I)	fleeting time, this world

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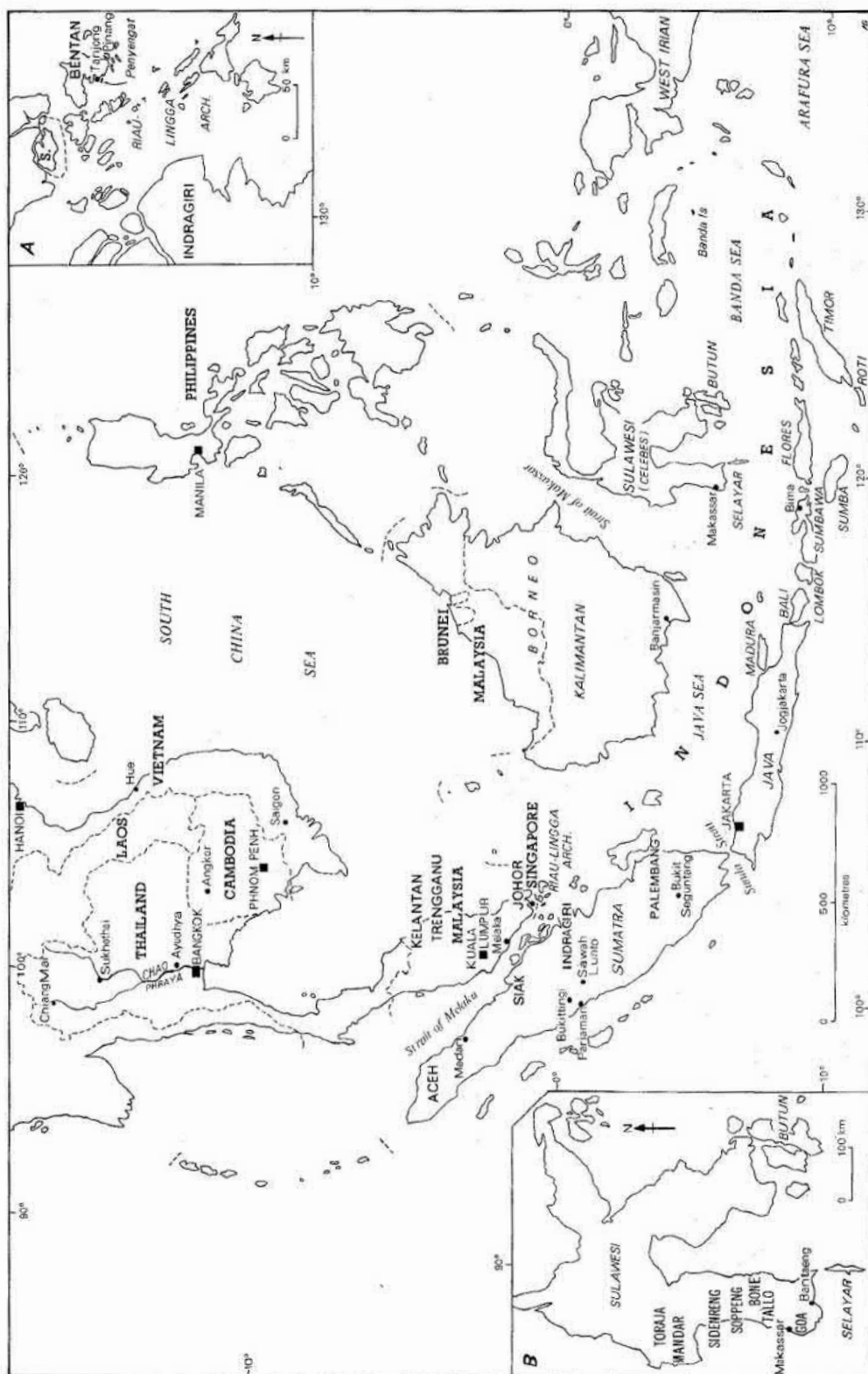
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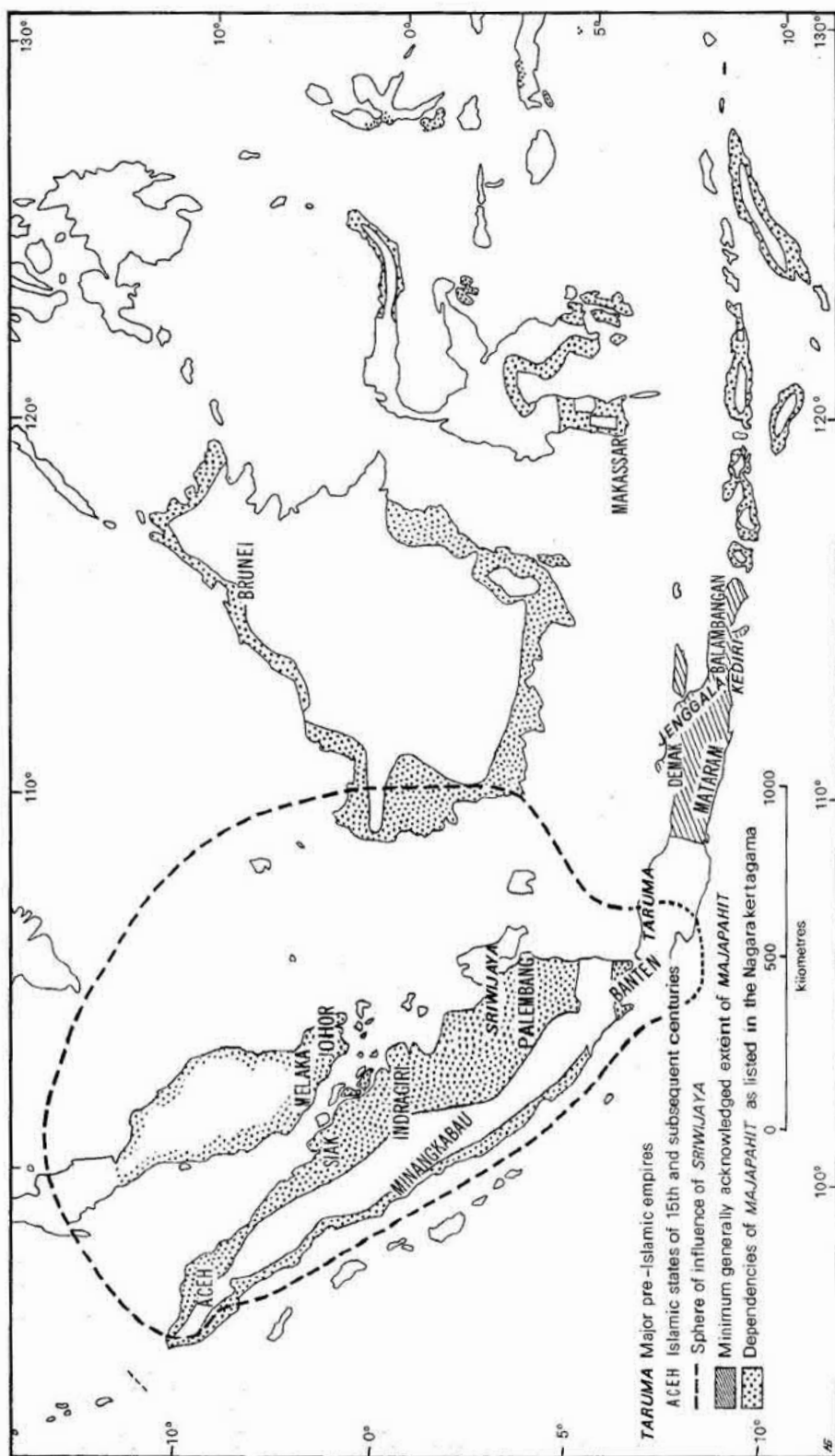
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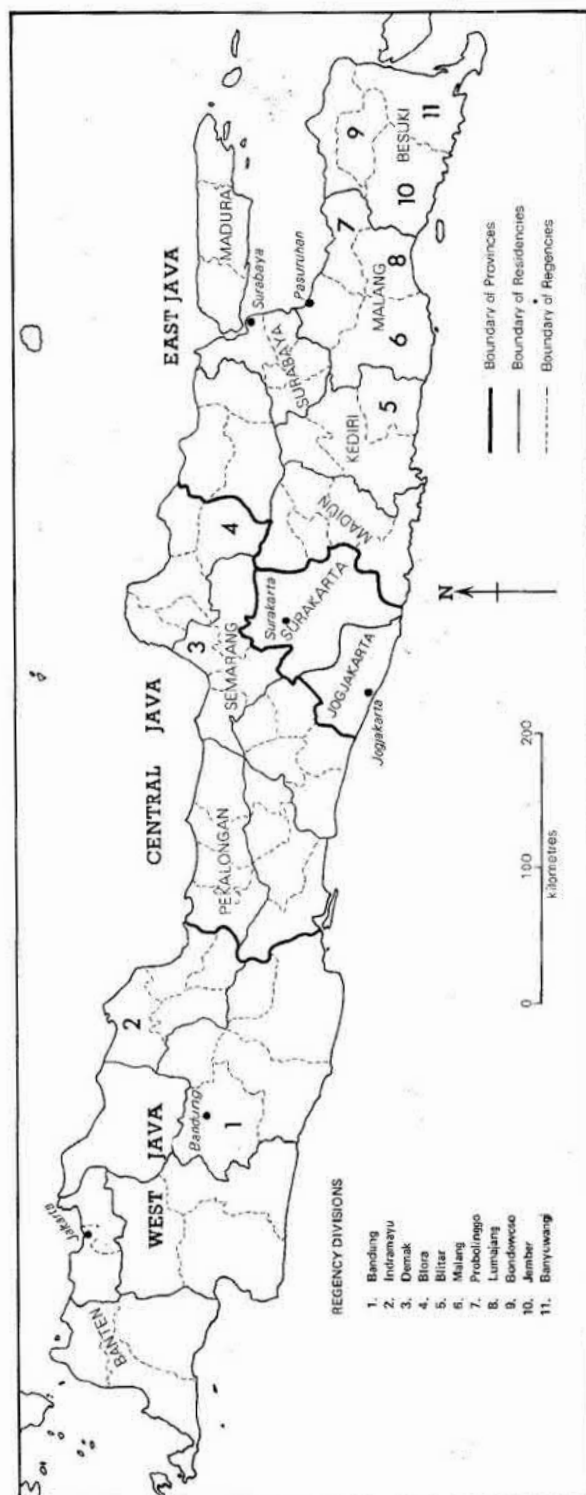
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SOUTHEAST ASIA



PRE-MODERN INDONESIA



TWENTIETH CENTURY JAVA

INTRODUCTION: THE STUDY OF THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN PAST

Wang Gungwu

When I first heard that a colloquium was to be held on Southeast Asian history-writing, I was immediately reminded of the pioneer volume on the subject edited by D.G.E. Hall, *Historians of South-east Asia* (London 1961) and the debate which it stimulated in the 1960s. In particular, I realized that we have come some way from the articles in *Journal of Southeast Asian History* and the papers presented to the International Conferences on Asian history held in the region in 1960-61 (Singapore and Manila), 1964 (Hong Kong) and 1968 (Kuala Lumpur) which had helped me a great deal in writing my essay on Southeast Asian historiography in the *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968). But it was not until after the colloquium was over and I had read all the papers that I fully appreciated how far we had come.

The authors of the twenty essays here have ranged over several hundred years of the writings of six of the nine countries in modern Southeast Asia and have approached their work in the highest traditions of Western learning. None of them had been asked to prove a given general thesis. Most of them had selected something that was part of their ongoing research which they thought was relevant and would be of interest, but the direction of their inquiries has turned out to be both new and purposeful.

The authors had initially responded to a set of questions on 'The Uses of History in Southeast Asia'. Eventually this led to the change to the present title, 'Southeast Asian Perceptions of the Past'. I did not know why this had been changed, but when I was asked to open the colloquium with some suggestions as to how we might proceed, it struck me that the shift of emphasis from 'uses' to 'perceptions' was important. It reminded me of one of Marx's 'Theses on Feuerbach' which could be modified for historians to read:

The historians have only perceived the past
in different ways: the point is to use it.

In short, perceiving is not enough. It is how the past is used that matters. To turn from 'use' to 'perception' may well be a historian's quest for origins and precedence, but it could also be a step back into academic abstraction. Indeed, using and perceiving are not always separable; it is through the uses of the past that we begin to discover what the perceptions were or to reconstruct what the perceptions must have been. Thus my opening remarks asked that we 'look out for the ways perceptions might have determined uses', as well as 'for the times when the way the past had been used had delimited the range of perception'. I also suggested that we consider the three main kinds of perceptions which should be relevant to our Southeast Asian studies:

- a) Perceptions of the past which seem to be the products of long centuries of social and political conditioning, the results of non-deliberate handing down of traditions, constituting something like a 'folk-memory'. Here the past was used and useful, making for communal solidarity and possibly also social harmony, but the emphasis was upon faithful transmission of what had been received. Such perceptions would normally have come from eras of stability and could serve the community well in times of crises.
- b) Perceptions of the past which are traceable to a specific source during a particular period of time. The sources could vary from a king, or a line of kings, an author or a group of authors, an inner crisis within the society, conversion to a foreign religion, external conquest. The emphasis here is upon the changes in perceptions from what they had been to what had become necessary or desirable. The point here is to distinguish between perceptions which had followed the conscious manipulation and re-ordering of the past. Where perceptions had changed largely because the world around had radically changed, these changed perceptions might still be further used deliberately for social and political purposes. Thus perceptions change and are then found to be useful. As for those which were produced by manipulations of the past, the question is whether the new perceptions were indeed lasting ones and did not tend to revert to older perceptions or become diluted by older perceptions over a period of time. A further question then would be to ask whether using the past in a manipulative manner could radically change objective conditions or whether such manipulations could only succeed when objective conditions themselves had radically changed.
- c) Perceptions of the past which depended on literacy, on a sizeable body of writings which were distributed outside courts and temples, and on well-established institutions which were enjoined to preserve such perceptions. Here again faithful transmission might have been emphasized, but there might also have been active variables at work in the writings themselves and in the institutions which produced and used them. Thus on the one hand, such perceptions of the past could have been steadily modified by later writings and by different uses of literacy. On the other hand, they could have developed a recurring quality which, in the midst of all kinds of political and economic change, could have been repeatedly resuscitated, thus providing an ultimately unbreakable chain of continuity with the past. The body of writings could be used and re-used to keep certain perceptions of the past always alive. In this case, it does not really matter whether the body of writings emphasized entertainment and literary merit, or taught valuable moral lessons, or espoused the ideal of a relative or 'a moveable truth', or called itself science and the pursuit of Truth. Whatever the writings embodied, their preservation ensured that certain ways of perceiving the past became in effect indestructible.

These considerations stress the continuities with the past. But it is apparent that, by seeking to understand the perceptions of the past (and the uses they imply), we also begin to observe some important processes of change in Southeast Asia. The recent processes concern reactions to colonial manipulations of the Southeast Asian pasts. Whether successful or not, justified or not, these reactions against colonial history have coloured the recent past so comprehensively that they have become major determinants of the historical events themselves. But, largely because these anti-colonial reactions have been obvious and have aroused much heated debate about their appropriateness, their real significance has often been missed. They are either defended with vigour and emotion or dismissed as distorting truth and therefore valueless. There has not been enough effort to see how these reactions had arisen at different times, how varied they have been, how creative, and how significant it is to examine the roles they have played in inducing or in obstructing change in Southeast Asia.

Most of the essays here illuminated for me the varied functions of the past by comparing different periods, the different kinds of crises the peoples have experienced over centuries and the different reactions to change which were rooted in long-transmitted traditions and widely shared values. When the more recent reactions against Western-induced changes are set against reactions to earlier pressures to change as embodied in surviving texts, whether they be *hikayat*, *babad*, *yazawin*, *phongsawadan* or *quoc-su*, perhaps there could be less obsession with the uniqueness of the recent experiences and more interest in understanding what continuities are more favourable to change and what changes are too irrelevant to go through with.

The colloquium had gone beyond the questions of functions and models, and well beyond matters of perceptions. Again and again, the authors were asked about first principles: why do people remember the past and historians write history? Who wants the stories told and who wants to listen to or read about them? Does the past really matter or is it selectively used merely to support existing attitudes or impossible future ideals?

Oliver Wolters thought the papers and the discussions had not gone far enough. The important features of the region – the several religions that dominated men's lives – were not fully tackled. By concentrating on more recent samples of texts and debates, the colloquium may have missed the chance to understand 'preoccupations which may or may not evince a perception or even an interest in the past' from examples of early literature and inscriptions. We had not gone back enough into the background of the kinds of perceptions we were trying to discover. On the other hand, 'perception' was probably too elusive an idea and the discussions simply could not get away from the *uses* in which such perceptions are manifest. He was insistent that the session on 'Popular Literature' was of critical importance. The forms of 'history' under that heading were the most difficult to comprehend and he questioned if we had thought enough about the relationship between elite and non-elite traditions and if we knew enough to evaluate the differences between the two and their significance.

The discussions that followed probed further at the gaps and the reservations and led to the following points which emerged with particular force:

1. The importance of the past in Southeast Asian cultures, particularly if compared to the Western societies which gave birth to academic historiography.
2. The problem of transmitting a picture of the past from one generation to the next, whether on a mother's knee, in a recitation or performance, in a chronicle written for a prince, or in school textbooks.
3. The relationship between oral and written history, seen to be not just a progression from the former to the latter, but a constant interaction between what is written (and often sacred) and what is oral and popular.
4. 'Cultural conquest' was rejected, but the problem of foreign literary models might be seen as the creative blending of a continuity with the indigenous past and a new beginning compatible with some international orthodoxy (Islam, Confucianism, political nationalism, etc.)
5. The character and function demanded of a hero.

It is for others to judge how far the authors here have succeeded in illuminating the Southeast Asian past. Their efforts, however, do lead us to ask how far we have come. And the most obvious feature that emerges is that there was in the Southeast Asian tradition no interest in the past for itself. What was encouraged was what Oliver Wolters calls a 'forward lookingness', or at least as James Fox puts it, the past 'perceived for its relevance to the present'. And in more recent times, there has been a recalling of the past, conscious efforts at reconstruction, which has clearly been made to influence the present if not the future as well.

This is, of course, not a new discovery. During the nineteenth century, traditional Western historians were only too ready to dismiss Southeast Asian writings as unhistorical when they had expected to quarry these works for facts and rejected them when the facts were not forthcoming. The judgment was based on a simple, almost self-apparent view, an easy confidence that history was primarily a matter of determining what happened and then analysing and explaining why it had happened and that any culture or people that did not do this did not have a sense of history and was therefore in some way inferior to those who did. This is a view that remains dominant in many quarters, not least among the few scholars of Southeast Asia who have been won over to the ideal of objective history. And it was not so long ago when the only question was one of applying the scientific method to some rather intractable materials. It was assumed that scholars at the time knew what was worth knowing and what they wanted to know; all that was needed was to ensure that a few more seekers for truth were found, including those from among young Southeast

Asians themselves, that they all be well-trained and that their writings conformed to the highest scholarly standards. Once this was done, the Southeast Asian past would join the ranks of the others and become something that would ultimately be correctly perceived.

This arduous quest for the Southeast Asian past has borne some unexpected results. For one thing, it has forced a radical rethinking of the questions that have been asked of the indigenous writings and led historians such as those who have contributed to this volume, to reconsider the nature of their materials. The traditional tools of scholarship are not in doubt, the skills of the philologists and literary scholars remain crucial to the study of 'documents'. But it has become obvious that historians must be more attentive towards the anthropologists, linguists and archaeologists whose work with preliterate societies shows that perceptions of the past may be discerned in the artifacts such societies have left behind, in their monuments, their stories, their rituals and their elaborate social structures. Historians have had to revise their views about writings that have previously been dismissed as 'fairy tale nonsense' and recognize that these have a legitimate place in the study of the Southeast Asian past and that, if they failed to understand how these writings reveal the heritage and transmission of that past, they would be impoverishing their present and future work. Eventually, by broadening their approach, they would become, in Anthony Reid's words, 'more aware of the interdependence of history and myth in every culture', and would also raise some fresh doubts about the limitations of traditional Western historiography itself.

Lest my remarks be seen as an attack on the scientific method, let me add that it is not the method that is at issue, only the danger of rigid academic professionalism in the name of objective history as the only way to throw light on the past. The various contributions to this volume remind us of the vigour and creativity among some Southeast Asian intellectuals during the past century in their efforts either to preserve their traditions or modify and strengthen them to cope with the modern world. They also warn us not to allow the imagination and enterprise of those for whom the past is excitingly meaningful to be stifled by an externally imposed discipline and respectability which still has nothing to offer people in the process of being reborn. The question is, 'Is history a more vital issue in Southeast Asia today than in Western societies?' The answer seems to be yes, if history is not defined as objects in an oriental museum but broadened to include perceptions of the past and the complex methods needed to discern and explain them.

But how far have we determined what these perceptions are? What have these 'forward-looking' perceptions to do with the study of the Southeast Asian past? If the past is not itself interesting, how does one go about studying it?

The essays here tell us that we are still exploring, that we have much to learn, that we are only beginning to clear away the misconceptions that had led us to ask the wrong questions about the Southeast Asian past. They also suggest that our missionary efforts to impose a different perception of the past upon Southeast Asians may be misguided. To be forward-looking is to free people from being cluttered by an irrelevant and momentarily dull chronicle of events that had happened and deserved to be forgotten. If that was what the past was like, why study it as fact, as it actually happened? Why not, as we dimly perceive it, as myth? Why not as images that might never have happened but were selected to serve the present and future because they were forceful and evocative, because they re-affirmed moral values and cultural differences, communal solidarity and the legitimacy of inherited spiritual symbols and rituals?

This does mean, of course, that the study of perceptions of the past is an attempt to understand the contemporary values of some periods of the past rather than the study of the events of those periods. Understanding such past values could never be a substitute for knowing what happened, but constitutes a valuable background for explaining what is happening today, why contemporary Southeast Asians respond as they do to current developments, and in what ways they are likely to interpret present events in the future. And it is indeed striking how almost every essay in this volume tells us as much about the period it covers as about the society today, a subject which a historian would not normally claim to study. It is also not surprising, therefore, that the efforts to illuminate such perceptions of the past increase our own knowledge of the many ways we make the past relevant to ourselves. In trying to empathize with what may appear to us a highly subjective view of history, we begin to appreciate all the better the more sophisticated nature of our own subjectivity. It might even help to sharpen our perceptions of the past in terms of what we want for our present and future and, should we wish to do so, to free us from the bonds of an illusory objective history that has been for so long most Western historians' Holy Grail.

That surely is not what the contributors set out to do. It is the Southeast Asian past that most of them sought to discover. But if that past is not of intrinsic interest to Southeast Asians, how does one continue? For periods when non-Southeast Asians had left their versions of what happened, for example, as with the Chinese invasions of Vietnam, the Portuguese of Melaka, the Dutch of Batavia, the Spanish of Manila and the British of Perak, how are Southeast Asians to resist accepting what others say? With what can they defend their willingness to forget what had happened and counter the intervention of other people's perceptions? The modern historian of Southeast Asia is not content to let the alien pictures go unchallenged and most of the contributors to this volume do hope to find indigenous memories to correct the arrogant claims of the interlopers' stories. But there are few signs that this can be successfully

done within the given Western historiographical framework. And as long as that framework survives as the only one acceptable to civilized scientific man, the future Southeast Asians are likely to see themselves as continuing to be cyphers in somebody else's code.

What then is the alternative? Are Southeast Asian perceptions of the past sufficiently coherent to offer a new framework? Oliver Wolters (in his comments at the Canberra colloquium) wondered if, in a world where people were religious beings, where this world was ephemeral, where one looked forward to death and the afterlife, the past might have a totally different meaning. With any one of the great religions of Southeast Asia, like Buddhism and Islam, for example, was there not a coherent and autonomous world-view of past, present and future which could help its believers ignore the secular Western framework? Certainly, for earlier times in Southeast Asian history, the historian today can see and understand how Southeast Asian rulers and their scribes and the local story-tellers had lived through grave crises and drawn whatever lessons they wished from their experiences. But it does not seem possible, on the surface, for this kind of freedom to survive in the small world where Southeast Asia is fully exposed to secularization, to firm rules of causality and responsibility and to modern historical explanation and judgment. And it would appear that, sooner or later, Southeast Asians will have to submit themselves to the full force of an alien historiographical framework and, indeed, many countries in the region are beginning to produce their own historians in that mould.

Where do we go from here? As someone from Southeast Asia who had already conceded the validity of a foreign framework, I am struck by the unease the contributors to this volume have aroused in me and how much they have undermined my confidence in that framework. They have revealed some of the richness, subtlety and artistry of earlier perceptions of the past which would now make me regret somewhat their inevitable passing. Surely this is not the end of all our efforts. If that powerful frame of scientific history must win in the end, let us hope that it does not do so at the expense of all that variety and originality that gave Southeast Asia its distinctive voices. I would insist that the essays in this volume have demonstrated that there is Southeast Asian flesh and bone to put on that iron frame.

Thus it would appear to me that this volume points the way to two important paths for historians, Southeast Asian or not, to follow. The first would lead to further inquiry about earlier perceptions of the past, the pursuit of all cultural remains in order to determine more precisely what such perceptions meant for different levels of society, for each community and the few outstanding individuals who purported to speak for their community. In particular, the inquiry should seek to reveal if there were changes in such perceptions over time, if they changed through contact with neighbours and foreign cultures and if there were patterns of such changes that may still be

discernible. From such efforts, it is hoped that attitudes towards sacral memories, towards persons and towards worldly events, may be more fully described and placed in some systematic perspective that each group of Southeast Asians might recognize as its own.

The second path leads more to the present and future of Southeast Asian history. It is already clear that at one level the region's history will from now on be formally locked into the kind of history that historians all over the world write. This means that at that level more historical writing will be along the lines of the historiography of Western social science and the narrative form or that of Marxist ideology and its variants. Some of the contributions here have noted where this has occurred, but are still able to show how traditional Southeast Asian perceptions have modified the attempts to write the new history. Despite the efforts of the modernizing elites to mould a new consensus through books, in schools and by decree there is still little evidence as to how the new methods and ideas about history have penetrated the modes of thought that underlie earlier perceptions of the past. In short, there may well be for a long time, if not indefinitely, other levels at which the Southeast Asian past will continue to be seen outside the Western historiographical framework. We can then anticipate many years of interaction between competing perceptions all over Southeast Asia and this will itself constitute a vital part of the historical process in the present and future of the region. The outcome of this interaction cannot be foreseen. What we have learnt from the contributions in this volume about earlier interactions, about the persistence of forms and values which have been strengthened by being free from specific events and therefore timeless, warn us against a simple faith in progress as a straight-line time-scale.

It seems to me that changes have been occurring in much more complex ways than can be explained in terms of progress and Western-style historiography and many more changes possibly even more complex are occurring and will occur. That process, accompanied by tension and bitter struggle, is one of the more dramatic features of modern Southeast Asian history. It would be easy to get it all wrong by insisting on alien categories in fixed positions on a pre-determined framework. This volume of essays, largely through its careful and sensitive elucidation of earlier layers of the process, of earlier patterns of change and their relevance to our understanding of the process today, points the way to what must be done. We are privileged to observe and record changing perceptions of the past, present and future today. It would be a pity if, by not understanding such perceptions in the past, we miss the chance to explain the vital changes today to our successors.

MODES OF STRUCTURING THE PAST

Underlying all the essays in this book is an awareness that the attempt to delineate the shape of the past as it appeared to another culture brings us back to our own mental architecture as Western-trained scholars. In discussing the themes of this book we frequently found ourselves re-examining the nature of the Western historiographic tradition in relation to those of Southeast Asia.

The three articles presented here examine some of these problems in perspective. They also illustrate vividly how the form in which a tradition is expressed embodies a view of the past and of the time dimension itself. By the same token, an established genre of historical description can induce people to look at the past in a particular way.

The oral narratives of Roti, while coexisting with written literature (in another, imported language) appear to remain wholly traditional in character and indigenous in purpose. They also demonstrate a sense of structure and sequential chronology in at least one autochthonous Southeast Asian tradition. The two following papers tackle the more difficult task of distinguishing a characteristically Malay-traditional use of the past in literature from a modern Western one, on the one hand, and from distinct Perso-Indian and Arabo-Islamic ones on the other.

**'STANDING' IN TIME AND PLACE:
The Structure of Rotinese Historical Narratives***

James J. Fox

Introduction

Time and place are the general parameters of history. Historiographic traditions may vary in the methods they rely upon, the evidence they accept and the conceptions of the world they seek to justify. But all forms of historiography from the simplest of oral traditions to the most sophisticated of literary endeavours must be concerned with relating certain structured events within some framework of time and place. To be a history, a narrative must establish a chronology and a location.

In this paper, I propose to consider the historical narratives of the island of Roti in eastern Indonesia. My aim is three-fold. I want to show how these narratives provide specific perceptions of the past. I then want to indicate how the seeming peculiarities of this oral tradition are, in effect, an attempt to establish a culturally acceptable chronology and location. And finally, I want to speculate on how, within the Rotinese context, these narratives take shape over time.

The island of Roti is the southernmost island of the Indonesian archipelago. The significance of a study of this island derives, in part, from the fact that its traditions represent one of the furthest extensions of the culture of Southeast Asia. On Roti one encounters reverberations of many of the same cultural preoccupations that are to be found in the major centres of influence in the region. Unlike these major centres, however, Roti is a small, peripheral and relatively unknown island. To accomplish what I propose in this paper, I must first provide some understanding of Rotinese culture and society. An oral historical tradition, such as the Rotinese possess, is more than a reflection on the past. It is an image of a people expressed and projected in time.

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*The Island of Roti*¹

The island of Roti is a low-lying, dry and badly eroded island. Yet its varied economy, consisting of intensive palm utilization, rice-cultivation, gardening, off-shore fishing, herding and pig-rearing, is remarkably productive. This economy has for centuries supported a population whose density has been sufficient to allow the development of local states with limited powers, the elaboration of court traditions, and the emergence of distinguishable, but by no means rigid, social classes. In actual numbers, however, the Rotinese are a minor population by Indonesian standards. There are 75,000 Rotinese on the island with approximately 35,000 more settled on Timor.

Politically the Rotinese were drawn into relations with the Dutch East India Company during the second half of the seventeenth century. The first treaty of contract with local rulers on Roti was signed in 1662. Subsequent treaties were signed in 1690, 1700, and 1756. By these formal treaties and by several agreements made after 1756, the island was gradually divided into eighteen separate domains (*nusak*), each with its own ruler. These rulers were variously referred to by the Dutch as *koning*, regent or *raja*. Within their domains each of these rulers or lords held the Rotinese title of *manek* which derives from the Rotinese root term *mane-*, meaning 'male'. Each *manek* presided at his own court which was attended by another Dutch-appointed lord known as the *feto* (or, in Rotinese *mane-feto*, 'female lord') and by still other clan lords known as the *manesio*, 'lords of nine', who represented the clans that made up the domain. Each court with its own variant of Rotinese *adat* law and its unique configuration of prerogative and ritual, epitomized the state and was referred to by the same term as that for 'domain'.

Despite a verbal exaggeration of the *manek*'s authority, his traditional powers were largely limited to the judiciary. The *manek* was more of a judge than an absolute ruler. He could exercise coercive powers only through his court but even the exercise of these powers was circumscribed by the requirement that his judgements accord with the advice of the court lords. The single most important check on the powers of the *manek* lay in the fact he could not alter the *adat* law of his domain which remained embedded in a web of proverbs, precedents and long-standing customary practices. Although this *adat* was flexible and subject to multiple interpretations which allowed a ruler the opportunities to press for particular judgements, it could not be abrogated. The *manek* was, like his subjects, — to quote a Rotinese phrase — 'a child of the *adat*'. Moreover, spiritual authority over the domain was vested in a titled figure of commoner status, the *dae langak* or 'Head of the Earth'. The Head of

¹ For a fuller description of Roti see, J.J. Fox, *Harvest of the Palm: Ecological change in Eastern Indonesia* (Cambridge, Harvard U.P., 1977); and *idem*, 'The Rotinese' in F. LeBar (ed.), *Ethnic Groups of Insular Southeast Asia* (New Haven, Human Relations Area Files Press, 1972) Vol. I, pp. 106-8.

the Earth in each domain was the traditional preserver of ritual and of *adat*. He had the right to contravene the judgements of the *manek* if they violated customary usage, for he held the ultimate ritual power over the fertility of the earth which, if withdrawn, would destroy the state.

Rotinese political theory, with its various cross-cutting distinctions between spiritual and temporal powers, 'male' and 'female' lords, noble and commoner clans, its court rules, ceremonies, prerogatives, and precedents, is a complex one. Each domain has, over time, given slightly different emphasis to the development of these general conceptions. Beginning in 1662 and continuing to the time of Independence, these domains and the dynasties that ruled them had developed their traditions in an officially sanctioned and relatively stable system of indirect rule. With independence, this traditional system was incorporated with minor modifications within the administrative structure of the Republic of Indonesia and it was relied upon as the legitimate means of governing the island. Only since 1968 has there been any attempt at a radical alteration of this traditional system and it is still too early to assess the consequences of these changes.²

Historically, the most powerful domain on the island was the geographically central one of Termanu. A variety of evidence suggests that Termanu was on the verge of gaining hegemony over the entire island at the time of the arrival of the Dutch. The Company located its *pagar* in Termanu and began by relying upon Termanu's rulers in its dealings with the rest of the island. The result, however, of Termanu's relations with the Dutch was a gradual curtailment of its influence, a progressive dismemberment of its territory and eventually the removal of a portion of its population to Timor. In area, Termanu still remains the largest single domain, but since the forced transfer and later migration of many of its inhabitants Termanu has ceased to be among the most populous. Termanu's historical narratives reflect its past power and political position; possibly the richest and most complex narratives of any domain on the island. In 1965-66, I was asked by the *manek* of Termanu, E.J. Amalo, to record the oral history of Termanu. Under the auspices of the *manek* (who was also the *camat* of Roti Tengah) I had the full support of all of the domain's elders and court lords including the invaluable assistance of the *dae langak*, S. Adulanu, without whose help I could hardly have proceeded at all. In this paper I will concentrate on a discussion of the historical narratives of Termanu.

² Although I have done fieldwork on Roti since 1968, I concentrate, in this paper, on describing the situation as it existed during my first fieldwork in 1965-66.

The Introduction of Christianity and Education to Roti

Relations with the Dutch led to the introduction of both Christianity and education to the island. For a variety of complex motives, the rulers and high nobles of the island began to accept Christianity in the first half of the eighteenth century. The first *manek*, the Lord of Thie, was baptized in 1729. By the middle of the nineteenth century most rulers had become Christians. Christianity spread slowly from the courts and it was not until the middle of the twentieth century that the majority of Rotinese came to profess the religion. Since, however, the foundations of Christianity were established even before the formation of Protestant mission societies, the spread of Christianity had little to do with missionary prompting nor did it conform with missionary ideals. Several belated attempts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to raise the standards of religious practice and instruction were, in fact, obliquely thwarted because they represented unwarranted interference in local affairs. Due to its early establishment and gradual dissemination within Rotinese society, Christianity is today inextricably fused with traditional culture.

A system of formal education was introduced on Roti at almost the same time as Christianity. The first school was begun in 1735. Its ostensible purpose was to provide religious instruction in the Malay language. Schooling spread faster than Christianity. Since it was considered a mark of prestige for each *manek* to establish a school in his own domain, all the *manek* vied among themselves to obtain schoolmasters from the Company. By 1756 Roti had a dozen schools in as many domains. Young Rotinese trained in Malay soon began to replace the schoolmasters who had been brought in from outside the island and the *manek* jointly negotiated with the Company to assume most of the support for their schools. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the Rotinese had one of the only self-sustaining, locally-supported Malay school systems in the Indonesian world. This tradition was continued fitfully through the nineteenth century to blossom after 1857, when the Netherlands East Indies Government introduced a subsidy for these schools. Government records report that by 1863 there were over fifty accredited Rotinese *mese malai* 'Malay masters' teaching in schools on the island. By 1871, in addition to the main schools in each of the eighteen domains, there were already sixteen 'village' schools and the number of these schools has continued to increase to the present day.

The Oral Tradition and Use of Language on Roti

Rotinese historical narratives are an integral part of an oral tradition. Any oral tradition invariably embodies an attitude toward language and its various usages that is crucial to an understanding of the tradition itself. On Roti historical factors have produced a diverse linguistic situation which may be briefly summarized as follows:

- 1) Each Rotinese domain claims to possess its own dialect of Rotinese. Although these claims exaggerate the island's linguistic diversity, there is nevertheless considerable contiguous dialect variation throughout the island.
- 2) The Rotinese also possess a ritual language which requires a parallel poetic phrasing of all utterances and is reserved for situations of formal interaction. To a certain extent, this ritual language serves as a unifying factor that overcomes some of the tendencies toward dialect differentiation.
- 3) The Rotinese use and recognize three distinct registers of Malay:
 - a) a high Malay associated with the nineteenth century Malay translation of the Bible,
 - b) standard Indonesian which is now taught in schools and used in dealing with the government and,
 - c) an everyday dialect of Malay, known as *Basa Kupang*, which has developed in Kupang since its founding in the nineteenth century.

Rotinese culture lays great stress on proper verbal communication. As a people, the Rotinese pride themselves on their facility with language. But this facility implies an understanding of what is considered to be the appropriate form or manner of speaking suitable for a particular situation. In assimilating new cultural forms the Rotinese have, in the course of their history, adopted new ways of speaking to deal with the outside influences. These new ways of speaking, derived from Malay, have been added as further levels to an already distinct and essentially stratified range of traditional linguistic forms. To some extent the use of new forms of language has reduplicated the pattern of traditional forms. Thus, for example, it would be considered improper to use ritual language in arguing a court case, or ordinary Rotinese in a ceremony. Similarly it would be considered inappropriate to use *Basa Kupang* in a government office, or everyday unelevated Indonesian in preaching a sermon. On the other hand, recourse to Rotinese ritual language is acceptable in a church service and the use of a flowery form of Indonesian at a traditional ceremony.

Several critical points should be emphasized in this regard. The Rotinese are concerned not simply with what is said but with the language used to say it. The historical narratives that I intend to consider are verbal productions. It is essential, therefore, to pay particular attention to the language in which they are told. Although since the eighteenth century the Rotinese have had the makings of a literary tradition in Malay, they have preserved their own history as an oral tradition. Writing until recently has been restricted to Malay and Malay has been reserved for specific purposes. To my knowledge there has never been an indigenous attempt to record the historical narratives. These narratives have always been confined to the Rotinese language and, more specifically, to particular dialects of Rotinese. Although characters in these

narratives may, at times, recite ritual language poetry to each other, ritual language itself is considered an equally inappropriate vehicle for the expression of the narratives. Since these are chiefly concerned with the political formation of particular domains, the use of a domain dialect is an essential mark of their authenticity.

The Historical Narratives as Verbal Presentation

What I have been calling 'historical narratives' are, in Rotinese, referred to as *tutui teteek*, 'true tales' or 'standing tales'. They are a subset of a more general category of tales and constitute one of a number of subtly interrelated oral genres which the Rotinese recognize.³ In cultural terms, the *tutui teteek* form an intermediary class of stories between those of the *bini*, 'poems or chants', and the *tutuik*, 'tales'. Each of these classes of narratives has its own distinguishing characteristics, forms, style and subject matter.

The *bini* are, by definition, recited in ritual language. They must always be composed in parallelism. Although it is perfectly possible to compose a short poem on almost any subject or, as increasingly occurs, to create a long poem in traditional style to fit a secular ritual, the *bini* are primarily concerned to relate a special repertoire of mythological narratives. These narratives concern the foundations of Rotinese culture — the origin of fire and of house-building, the introduction of the water buffalo and of rice and millet, and the spread of the arts of tie-dyeing and weaving. They also recount the primeval relations between the Lords of Heaven and the Lords of the Sea and their descendants. In the myths, Roti is the meeting ground of these supernatural beings and the Rotinese the principal beneficiaries of their primal struggles. Thus the Rotinese claim links with these beings and are likened to them in those chants that are recited at mortuary ceremonies. But the heavenly genealogies that organize the repertoire of chants form a distinct set of pedigrees from those of the various dynastic genealogies that structure relations within the domains. Similarly when places are indicated in the chants, the allusions are to a conventional set of ritual names. The mythological cycle of narratives in the *bini* has only a tenuous and indirect bearing on the historical narratives of the domains.

Unlike the class of *bini* which properly defines a limited corpus of narratives, *tutuik* embraces the broadest possible collection of stories. The *tutuik* include, for example, numerous animal tales and a wide variety of other tales (such as that of the half-man, the seven-headed horse, or the lost fish-hook) all of which have common variants throughout the Indonesian world. In

³ A useful, indeed an invaluable, preliminary to the study of any oral tradition is a survey of its culturally recognized genre and their inter-relation. A model of this kind of study is in G.H. Gossen, *Chamulas in the World of the Sun: Time and Place in a Maya Oral Tradition* (Cambridge, Harvard U.P., 1974).

addition there are many tales that must be provisionally described as 'Rotinese' in that no variant has yet been recognized elsewhere. The corpus of published tales⁴ and those that I have subsequently recorded together form only a portion of the tales told on the island. Nonetheless they constitute a considerable collection. If one may venture any generalization about them, it would be that their most frequent hero — whether human or animal — is a cunning figure who achieves his end by wit, persuasion and deception.

The hero as 'trickster' is a pervasive theme in the *tutuik* and I would contend that this theme reflects an image that the Rotinese have of themselves. This is particularly evident in the popularity of some relatively recent tales about Abu Nawas. The first Indonesian collection of these tales, of Arabic origin, was published in Jakarta in 1922 and since 1928 a further selection has been reprinted fourteen times by Balai Pustaka.⁵ However these tales may have reached Roti, they have undergone a transformation in the Rotinese oral tradition.⁶ Abu Nawas, the wily advisor to Sultan Harunurrajjid, has become Aba Nabas, a Rotinese court lord with the special title of *manedope*. Today for one Rotinese to call another an 'Aba Nabas' is a common form of praise.

The category of *tutuik* also includes that separate subset of tales, *tutui teteek*, that I have labelled as the 'historical narratives'. What distinguishes these tales as a set is the particular concern of this paper.

The 'Rootedness' of the Historical Narratives

Teteek, in the compound term *tutui teteek*, is a reduplicated form of *tee*. In strict etymological terms this form *tee* is probably derived, by the loss of a medial consonant, from *tebe*. *Tee* (in ordinary language) and *tebe* (in some versions of ritual language) denote what is 'true, real or actual'. The Rotinese, or more specifically the people of Termanu, seem however, to associate the term *teteek* with another root with the same phonological form *tee*, which is used to refer to something that is 'standing still, upright, erect or at rest'. A common usage would be for a pole or post that has been stuck in the ground to mark a position or border. By means of this folk etymology, a symbolic linkage is created between what is 'true' and what 'stands upright or fixed in place'. This condition or quality is what I propose to describe as the 'rootedness' or, perhaps more correctly, the 'fixity' of the historical narratives. Many tales are told from domain to domain simply because they are good stories. But as I discovered in collecting versions of the same tale in different

⁴ J.C.G. Jonker, 'Rotineesche Verhalen', *BKI*, 58 (1905) pp. 369-464; D. Manafe, 'Tiga Buah Tjeritera dari Roti Lelenuk', *Bahasa dan Budaya*, 9, v, vi (1905) pp. 247-253; Jonker, *Rottineesche Teksten en Vertaling* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1911); and *idem*, 'Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Rottineesche Tongvallen', *BKI*, 68 (1913) pp. 521-622.

⁵ N.St. Iskandar, *Abu Nawas* (Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1971).

⁶ At some future date, I intend to compare Rotinese versions of these tales which I have recorded with the original published versions.

domains, a tale that is merely a good story in one domain may be a 'true tale' or 'standing tale' in another. It is rooted in that domain, accounts for some feature of that domain's organization, and is related to other tales of a similar sort. For a tale to be acceptable as a *tutui teteek*, it must be fixed in time and place and must establish its authenticity according to Rotinese criteria of evidence.

The Chronology and Authenticity of the Narratives

The historical narratives of each domain constitute a dynastic chronicle. Their linear order — the relation of one narrative to another — is dependent for its coherence upon the articulation of the genealogy of the *manek*. His prestige genealogy forms the frame of reference for the organization of the domain — the skeletal structure of the body politic. A historical narrative must establish its chronology by reference to a particular ancestor in this prestige genealogy.

Any genealogy is an ordered succession of names beginning with the name of an apical ancestor and proceeding in a direct line to the name of the father of the person for whom the genealogy is intended. The genealogy of a *manek* is thus a direct uninterrupted series of names. It is the only public genealogy in the domain; all other genealogies are personal and hence private. The recitation of one's own genealogy is considered an invocation of the ancestors named in it. Such recitations are ideally reserved for ritual occasions at which there are proper offerings for the ancestors. The *manek*'s genealogy can be public precisely because he himself is rarely involved in reciting it. The genealogy is vouchsafed by others in the domain. It is not uncommon for many Rotinese to know their *manek*'s genealogy better than they know their own. Nor is it unusual for some *manek* to be uncertain about portions of his own genealogy and to have to refer to an elder for clarification. The public position of the *manek* is too important to allow personal ignorance to interfere with the functioning of the domain.

All the nobles of a domain and even members of certain commoner clans claim genealogies whose names, at some point or other, link with the names in the prestige genealogy. One could say that a person's descent status depends on the number of these genealogical names shared in common with the prestige line. By putting together these various genealogical lines, it is possible to construct a complex ramifying rank structure. But this structure never embraces all of the clans of a domain. A Rotinese domain is not unified by some kind of all-embracing genealogy. Certain clans — invariably the clan of the Head of the Earth, for one — have their own separate genealogies.

Nevertheless the narratives that concern these clans also refer to the genealogy of the *manek*. To establish a point in time for the occurrence of the events related in any narrative, it is not so much a descent link with the ruling line that is considered significant but rather the relation of alliance between a named ancestor of the *manek* and a named ancestor — often thereafter regarded

as the founding ancestor — of a clan. This alliance may be based upon a marriage relation but more often it rests on some agreement, pact or bond of friendship between the two ancestors. Many of the narratives are concerned to relate the events surrounding this alliance since, by it, that particular clan was incorporated within the state and gained the privileges and prerogatives that it enjoyed at court.

The collection of all of these narratives chronicles the political formation of the state and the significant history of its rulers. But it is not the right of the *manek* to preserve these narratives. (This, in itself, would be one of the main reasons why oral history on Roti has not become a literary tradition.) There is, in fact, no single locus for this history. Each constituent clan of a domain is, in theory, supposed to maintain its portion of the whole. And if there is any single arbiter or authority — as is the case in Termanu — on the history of the domain as a whole, it is not the *manek* but the *dae langak* (Head of the Earth) who has this function in his capacity as guardian over all matters of customary usage. Thus the Head of the Earth, whose ritual authority is symbolically opposed to the political power of the *manek* and whose genealogy precludes any association by descent with him, is the ultimate preserver of the *manek*'s position.

One of the implications of the way in which this history is preserved has to do with the notion of testimony — a concept of considerable importance in some traditions of historiography. An understanding of testimony is well-developed in Rotinese court procedures, but it is rendered irrelevant with regard to the historical narratives. The authenticity of a particular narrative is assured if that narrative is told by the elder (or elders) who, within a lineage or clan, is considered to be the rightful (senior) descendant of the ancestor whose deeds are recounted. Since lineage can segment and descent lines ramify, there can be some question about who this rightful descendant is. The Rotinese, however, have a variety of rules that determine succession in each generation, so that the number of potential narrators is limited. This means, however, that criticism of the 'authenticity' of a narrative is levelled initially at the person of the narrator and only secondarily at the coherence and internal structure of the narrative. This also means that if a clan or lineage dies out, there is no one to preserve its narrative, and it ceases to have significance as a 'standing tale' in the domain. Among the Rotinese, histories are not maintained for history's sake; the past is preserved for its relevance to the present. In Termanu, for example, the small clan of Ulu Anak has all but ceased to exist. I know from Dutch records that this clan was once of considerable importance. During my two long periods of research in Termanu, I made repeated attempts to discover its narratives, but in all cases I failed for there was no one to tell them.

Location and the Evidence of Language

Location, no less than chronology, is critical in establishing the 'rootedness' of the historical narratives. The concept of location, however, implies more than an intimate knowledge of the physical geography of a domain. It is not location (physical geography) *per se* that is significant, but a rich and multifaceted social geography. Thus a knowledge of place names parallels the knowledge of ancestral names in defining the parameters of Rotinese history.

A first premise of the Rotinese conception of location is that place names change to commemorate significant events that have occurred in their vicinity or have established some new relation for them. Potentially, the name of any place on Roti can be endowed with great significance. Actually, special significance tends to focus on unusual land formations, prominent or peculiarly-shaped rocks, sources of water, rice fields and areas of residence of varying sorts including the separate domains of the island itself. A second premise is that the changing of names is a continuing process. The idea of some mythical ancestors who assigned names to places once and for all time is entirely foreign to the Rotinese. Hence in the late 1960s, for example, all *desa* or village area names in Termanu were completely changed to signal the initiation of Indonesia's 'New Order' on the island. This means, in effect, that significant places tend to have more than one name, since old names are not to be forgotten. They are simply superseded, creating in the process levels of meaning which the narratives are concerned to explicate. By this explication the narratives establish further evidence of their validity.

Explication is a form of argumentation. Among the Rotinese this argumentation invokes the evidence of language itself. The dissection of words, the resort to homonyms, the assertion of folk etymologies, the play on words, metaphor and allusions, the alternation of ordinary and ritual words, all of these verbal devices constitute a complex form of argumentation that is an essential part of the oral presentation of the narratives.

To an outside observer, especially one who examines these narratives as written texts, much of this argumentation – if it is intelligible at all – must seem bizarre. But in a tradition where location is not a simple notion, where knowledge is structured by naming and where verbal manipulation is a respected art, this process of argumentation – however peculiar it may seem – is an integral expression of a historiographic intention. Names do more than locate a tale; they establish its validity.

To provide an example of this type of argumentation I quote the concluding portion of a long tale that relates the slaughter of a Dutch Company Officer in Termanu. The narrator blames this killing on a *manek* of Termanu named

Tola Manu. To do this, he tries to show that the name of the domain, Termanu, is derived from the *manek*'s name, Tola Manu. But he must also counter other claims to explain Termanu's names. In Rotinese, for example, Termanu is referred to as Pada and one common derivation of this name is from the first ancestor of the Head of the Earth, Pada Lalais. The narrator counters this claim, which remains unstated in the tale, by deriving the name, Pada, from the verb *padak* used to describe a key incident in his tale. As an alternative explanation the narrator admits the possibility that the name Termanu may be derived from a complicated Ndaonese corruption of a Rotinese phrase spoken in the dialect of Thie. He is willing to permit this etymology because other tales about Tola Manu link him very closely with the Ndaonese, a separate population living on a tiny island off the western tip of Roti. In the tale, the site of the slaughter of the Dutch Officer is Kota Leleuk which was also the site of a Ndaonese settlement. As yet another possible explanation, the narrator admits the name may also come from the name of a river on the north coast of Timor which one of Tola Manu's early ancestors visited and named. The argument proceeds by progressive inclusion. Any or all of the etymologies that bolster the critical assertions of the tale are acceptable. Since most of the argument is only intelligible as a play on Rotinese words, I include the relevant Rotinese phrases in brackets.⁷

The island of Roti calls Tola Manu's domain, 'The domain that slaughtered the Company' [*Nusa manatati Koponi*]. Before this Tola Manu's domain was called *Koli Oe do Buna Oe*; this was shortened to *Koli do Buna*. But because Tola Manu had sworn [*padak*] his people to do this murderous deed, the population of other domains call it 'The sworn domain' [*nusa nana-padak*] and they shortened this and said *Pada*. Thus the name *Pada* originated and continues to this day.

But the Company and those who speak Malay call it *Tarmanu* but they write it *Termanu*. It is said that *Tarmanu* comes from *Tola Manu*. This arose because some domains did not say *Tola Manu* but rather said *Tora Manu*. Accordingly the Company also said *Tora Manu*; after some time, they said *Tor Manu*; in pronunciation, they altered it again, saying *Termanu*; and after that, they wrote it *Termanu*.

Some old men say that *Tarmanu* comes from *tala* and *manu* and that the Ndaonese gave it this name. It is said that when *Koli do Buna* was still a great harbour, trading *perahu* never stopped coming to Roti and they were accustomed to anchor at

⁷ This is my translation of a segment of the Rotinese text in Jonker, 'Rotineesche Verhalen'.

Kota Leleuk: Butonese, Makasarese, Solorese, Savunese and Ndaonese, some coming, some going. And they were accustomed to hold cockfights [*laka-tatalak manu*]. The Ndaonese would be working gold in Dengka or Thie and would hear that there would be cockfighting at Kota Leleuk. And when they were on their way to let their cocks fight, Rotinese would meet them and ask them: 'Where do you want to go, men of Ndao?' Since they did not understand Rotinese properly, they would not say: 'We are going to hold cockfights' [*Ami meu maka-tatalak* or (as this is said in the dialect of Thie) *maka-tatarak manu fa*]. Instead they said: 'We go hold cockfight' [*Ami meu matara manu*]. After a while, people called the domain, 'The domain that holds cockfights' [*Nusa maka-tatala manuk*] but the Ndaonese said, 'The domain hold cockfight' [*Nusa matara manu*] and, in Malay, it was called *Negeri Termanu*.

But according to the story of another teller of tales, it is said that the first ancestor of Pada came from Amfoang [on Timor]; in a domain there called Lelogama, there is a river which until now is still called *Termanu*.

The Historical Narratives as Cultural Reflections, as Entertainments, and as History

In concentrating on the structure, style and forms of Rotinese historiography, my intention has been to relate the form of these narratives to the perceptions of the past which they present. The oral historiographic tradition of the Rotinese is a complex one. It emphasizes linguistic expressiveness, verbal dexterity, and a virtuosity of argument and reference framed in terms of an intimate knowledge of local names. This, I would maintain, is also crucial to the way in which the Rotinese see themselves and their past.

Termanu's historical narratives purport to explain the founding of the domain, the conquest of its territories, the unification of its clans within the court system, and the successes and failures of its ruling line. The unifying theme that runs throughout most of these narratives – the point that they are intended to portray – is the sustained and unfailing deviousness of Termanu's rulers and of their loyal followers. A kind of deceptive cleverness, similar in some respects to the Malay concept of *akal*, is a quality admired by the Rotinese. The quick wit necessary to devise an elaborate stratagem or to seize a ready opportunity and the ability to persuade someone by whatever means and to convince him in the face of contrary evidence, these are some of the qualities that established the ancestral founder of Termanu's dynasty and have continued to be manifested by his rightful successors. From the initial deception of the Head of the Earth through all sorts of conquests and triumphs gained

not by force but by trickery, Termanu's historical narratives are predicated on the superior cleverness of the ruling line of the *manek*. Even the major failures of the dynasty are attributed to an over-reaching cleverness.

In the narratives, Termanu's successful *manek* or their followers become personified as true trickster-heroes. Tales of the exploits of the *manek* thus make splendid entertainment. In listening to the episodes of their past, an audience in Termanu is entertained by the ridiculous antics, absurd gullibility and unbearable cleverness of their various ancestors. I have sat with Rotinese who have cried with laughter at the foolishness and credulity of their predecessors. And yet these tales, as humorous as they may seem, have established the relations among clans and lineages that are still maintained. These entertainments from the past still determine present relations within the domain.

One of the results of Roti's relations with the Dutch is the availability, in Holland, of a considerable collection of documents relating to the history of the island since about 1650. By carefully working through these documents, I have discovered that, with one possible exception, all of the rulers since 1662 who are named in the oral genealogy of Termanu can be identified and their period of rule dated. Their order of succession is a faithful representation of the past. In this respect, the parameter of chronology for the historical narratives cannot be faulted.

Most of the narratives and the genealogical chronology to which they are fixed relate, however, to the period before the arrival of the Dutch and cannot be independently assessed. But some narratives relate to the period after Dutch arrival, and for these I have generally been able to identify and to date the historical incidents on which they are based. Besides enhancing the claims of a dynasty, justifying clan relations and privileges and providing general entertainment, Termanu's historical narratives present a certain vision of the past. For example, the massacre of the Dutch Company Officer and his men at Kota Leleuk in Termanu, whose narrative conclusion I have quoted in this paper, occurred on the 11th of October 1746. Concerning this one incident, there exist various accounts by Dutch Officers and a personal account written by a Company scribe on behalf of the *manek* of Termanu himself. The oral narrative of this event is, in certain broad outlines, similar to these contemporaneous accounts. But this narrative is not an accurate, factual account of what occurred. In many revealing ways, it is a falsification of what happened at that time. In blatant contrast, for example, to his representation as the initiator of a plot to destroy the Dutch and their allies, the Lord of Termanu, in the events that led up to this one incident, seems to have acted in spontaneous outrage at the behaviour of a Dutch officer, his own ally, who had grossly abused Rotinese traditional values. The evidence would indicate that he did not play the part of a cunning trickster, the role into which Rotinese tradition has tended to cast all of the great Lords of Termanu. The narrative is, therefore, not a record but a perception of the past. And this perception of the past is directly related to the Rotinese image of themselves and of their relations to one another.

The Shaping of Past Events

Although their chronology and location may be reasonably accurate, the historical narratives are essentially entertaining charter-tales with some factual basis that are fixed in a particular domain and generally preserved by a specific clan. The important question to ask is not how much they tell us about past events but how they take shape within the Rotinese oral tradition. On this question, I can offer only a number of speculative suggestions.

First of all, as I have indicated, the historical narratives relate to the relatively distant past and are associated with some of the older ancestors named in the prestige genealogies. The recounting of contemporary occurrences is not considered as *tutui teteek* but merely as 'talk' or *dedeak*. The last *manek* of Termanu about whom there are well-developed narratives is *Mane Mauk Amalo* who reigned in the first half of the nineteenth century.

The time-lag between events and the tales told about them is critical to the formation of the narratives. What I suspect occurs is this. The names of figures, such as *manek*, high nobles, and important ancestors, are preserved in genealogies since reference to them is crucial to the structure of the domains.⁸ In domains where the dynasty has continued and relations among the clans have been stable, the succession of names has remained intact. Similarly place names which are changed to commemorate significant events at the time of their occurrence or shortly thereafter are preserved as part of the everyday social landscape of a domain. But the memory of events is not assured. Over time a chain of events is reduced to an incident, a simple vignette about previous occurrences. These vignettes are, to a greater or lesser extent, gradually assimilated to prevalent models available from among numerous folktales and eventually some of them are retold as historical narratives. The relationship between 'tales' and 'standing tales' is a close one. Thus the main characters in the historical narratives are — like the heroes in the folktales — cunning, eccentric, and even at times ridiculous.

I think I can illustrate these processes by reference to a particular nineteenth century *manek* about whom tales were, it seemed, beginning to form at the time of my first fieldwork in 1965-66. This was *Mane Kila Muskanan* who, according to Dutch records, reigned from 1876 to 1887. This *manek* was also known by his Christian name Stephanus Paulus Amalo and was, by all accounts, a remarkable character. He was a member of the royal lineage, but he had gone to sea as a young man and only on his return to Roti late in life was he chosen as the *manek*. The Dutchman N. Graafland, on a visit to Roti in 1887, recorded his lengthy impressions of Kila Muskanan which I will briefly summarize here.

⁸ J.J. Fox, 'A Rotinese Dynastic Genealogy: Structure and Event' in T. Beidelman (ed.), *The Translation of Culture* (London, Tavistock, 1971) pp. 67-71.

Graafland reports that at the time of his visit, Kila Muskanan was under accusation by his subjects, but was still able to maintain his prestige. He spoke the best Malay of any of the rulers of Roti and wore European clothes which suited him and gave him 'the appearance of an English tourist'. As a youth he had sailed to Menado, Singapore, Hong Kong and England, eventually becoming the captain of a small coaster. His household was cluttered with the remains of his youth: Indo-European tables, stools, sofas, easy-chairs without upholstery; broken mirrors, stopped clocks, a 'chronometer with thermometer and barometer' — all defective; pictures of ships in storm, of others safely in the harbour of Hong Kong and even a picture of Napoleon beside the Pyramids; all kinds of pipes and smoking equipment; a violin without strings; and hung on all the walls, pictures of women 'of questionable beauty'. Graafland attributed to Kila Muskanan's seaman's life two other 'horribly shameful habits: cursing which shows no indication of refinement and an addiction to strong drink'.⁹

Nearly a hundred years later Kila Muskanan is remembered in Termanu with a kind of humorous regard that has translated his foibles into marks of his rule. He is recalled by two nicknames: *Mane Lela Foe* and *Mane Makabebek*. The first nickname, *Lela Foe*, refers to the mottled white markings associated with the crocodile as Lord of the Sea and with the original water buffalo that, according to Rotinese myths, emerged from the ocean depths. At one level, this name respectfully associates *Mane* Kila Muskanan with the power of the sea but, on another level, the vignette that accompanies this name goes on to explain that the white marks on the *manek*'s person were whiplash scars gained while he was a lowly seaman. The second nickname involves a play on words. *Bebek* in the name *Mane Makabebek* can be interpreted as the Indonesian word for 'duck' or for the sound that a duck makes: *bek, bek*. Rotinese do not raise ducks, and consider them a foreign aquatic bird. The name *Mane Makabebek* can thus be rendered as the 'Lord who acted like a duck' or, more simply, 'Lord Quack-Quack'. But *bek*, in Rotinese, is the word for 'what'. Memories of Kila Muskanan focus on the fact that since he had spent much of his life away from the island, he had great difficulties in following Rotinese court cases on which he was supposed to render judgement. At court, he was always asking 'what, what?'. Therefore besides its Malay interpretation as 'Lord Quack-Quack', the same nickname can be given a Rotinese interpretation as 'Lord What What'. Both names admirably convey the spirit of the narratives and express the mocking affection with which the people of Termanu describe their former rulers. Given the unfolding structure of Termanu's historical narratives, Kila Muskanan would be one of the most likely figures after Mauk Amalo about whom narratives might cluster. In 1965-66, there was not yet what one could call a full-fledged 'standing tale' about him but I would contend that

⁹ N. Graafland, 'Het eiland Rote', *Mededeelingen van wege het Nederlandsch Zendeling-genootschap*, 33 (1889) pp. 239-277.

the process of tale-telling was already well under way. There was no one alive who could personally claim to remember his reign. Indeed very little was remembered at all of his reign. It was mainly the character of the *manek* about which anecdotes were being told by the generation of his grandchildren. There was enough factual basis to these anecdotes to identify this *manek* and the style of his rule and enough, it would seem, to transform him into one of the great characters of the historical narratives.

The Vulnerability of Rotinese Historical Traditions

In examining the ways in which Rotinese historical narratives 'stand' within the parameters of time and place, one must recognize their vulnerability. These narratives derive their chronological coherence from detailed dynastic genealogies and their location from within the political structure of specific domains. They depend for their significance on the states whose organization they purport to explain and justify. For over three hundred years, these states have been maintained with relatively little external interference. With the coming of the 'New Order', there has occurred a radical break with the past. The office of *manek* has been abolished and the domains reorganized. The old structures persist, in conception at least, for most Rotinese. It is too early to tell what will become of the historical narratives in the oral tradition of the Rotinese.

In the words of the fabulist Borges — whose life's work forms a profound reflection on perceptions of the past — time, place and action compose the 'dramatic unities' not just of history but of literature as well.¹⁰ It is possible that, once detached from specific genealogies and domains, the succession of the narratives that chronicle the history of a domain will cease to be significant. The tales, with time and place consigned to an indefinite past — when the *manek* ruled on Roti — may merge with other related tales. Those that continue to be told will be told for the telling itself. And those who gather these tales will consider them as folk literature rather than folk history.

¹⁰ J.L. Borges, 'The Secret Miracle' in *A Personal Anthology* (New York, Grove Press, 1967) p. 187.

SOME COMMENTS ON STYLE IN THE MEANINGS OF THE PAST *

Shelly Errington

Some of the most distinguished and enlightening works by Western commentators concerning Southeast Asian culture and thought have addressed the question of the relation between the events of the past (generally termed 'history') and the numerous writings from Southeast Asia dating from before the nineteenth century. Much of the commentary has assumed that the impulse which brought forth these texts was *to write history*, and the failure of these texts as history is therefore at first glance inexplicable. An effort to convert the inexplicable into reasons — to close the gap between the style of Western historical writings and the styles of Southeast Asian texts — has produced a number of theories, often enlightening: that, as Malinowski said of myths, these texts are for the justification of present social arrangements; that, although based on real events, their writers distort these real events of the past in order to advance the political interests of their royal patrons, or (alternatively) their writers interpret events favourably so as to ensure an auspicious reign; that the function of texts was not merely to record history but to influence it, a magical not merely secular function.

That the problem of the relation of these texts to the past could arise at all is due to the fact that so many of the events which they recount either did happen or else strike commentators as possible or probable.¹ The gap between these texts and historical writing lies most obviously in the fact that real and possibly real events are mixed with ones which seem to the historian impossible or improbable, all of them not uncommonly held together within a framework of royal genealogies rather than of chronology. Some historians have taken as their task the reconstruction of history, searching these texts for material, in which case there is usually no criterion internal to the text for their task and the sorting out is left to their own judgment: that a kingdom split because two brothers fought seems possible to a historian, but that a king descended from heaven or disappeared into it does not. Others, especially in the more recent past, have tried to understand the relation between what seem two different types of events in these texts, and have sought to penetrate the logic behind their linking.

It seems to me that the consciousness which informs historical writings and that which informed Classical Malay *hikayat*, the genre of Southeast Asian writings which I am most familiar with, are profoundly alien to one another, in

* A revised version of this paper has appeared in *JAS* 38, ii (February 1979), pp. 231-44.

¹ The problem does not present itself in such an acute form, for instance, to anthropologists dealing with tribal myths, in which the recognizable historical content is usually minimal. Of course, this problem in its most general sense — the question of the relation between the text or myth and 'what is real' — presents itself there as well; but there 'the real' is called not 'history' but 'social structure'.

impulse as well as in artifact. I will approach this subject through an inspection of style, for only through a close examination of the form in which thoughts are expressed can we begin to glimpse the meaning of that thought. In the first part of this paper I will point out certain elements of style in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, a Malay text dating from about the sixteenth or seventeenth century. In the second part of the paper I will comment on aspects of historical style — perspective, audience, the text's coherence — contrasting them in a subsequent section to aspects of *hikayat* style. These are followed by some comments on the sense in which the past makes an appearance in this *hikayat*.²

Transitions and Repetition in the Style of Hikayat

These are the first passages of *Hikayat Hang Tuah*:³

Bismi'llahi'rrahmani'rrahim, wabihi nasta'inu bi'llahi'l-a'la. This is the *hikayat* of Hang Tuah, who was very faithful to his lord and performed extremely loyal services for his lord. There was once a raja [king] of heaven. This raja's kingdom was extremely large. None of the other rajas of heaven was equal to him. They all obeyed his commands. If his majesty went out to receive homage from all the kings and ministers and travelling students, retainers held up drawn swords fastened with gems and studded with precious stones. When the raja commanded the rajas and ministers, his majesty looked to the right, and the rajas and ministers on the right all bowed, and the retainer of the right conveyed the raja's command to the others. When his majesty looked to the left, the rajas and ministers of the left all bowed, and the retainers of the left conveyed the raja's command to the others. His majesty's name was Sang Perta Dewa. Sang Perta Dewa knew that he would obtain a child.

² Aside from references cited, this essay has four sources which I would like to acknowledge: a lecture by James Siegel in 1969 in which he said that perspective in painting isolates the viewer from the viewed, at the same creating a single privileged point for viewing; a letter to me from Benedict Anderson in 1973 in which he said that 19th century novels allow the reader to hold all the strands of action in mind at once; Tolstoy's *War and Peace*; and Erich Auerbach's *Mimesis*, especially the chapters 'Odysseus's Scar' and 'Ganelon and Roland' (see n.4 below).

³ Translated passages appearing in this paper are my own, drawn from Kassim Ahmad's romanization of one text (Kuala Lumpur, 1968). The original texts of *Hikayat Hang Tuah* were written in Arabic script, which does not use punctuation marks; nor did its conventions include paragraphing. In translating, I have used commas and periods because English is incomprehensible without them, but have not followed Kassim Ahmad's use of colons, semi-colons, or divisions into paragraphs as they are, for my purposes, unnecessary stylistic divergences from the original. The Malay passages, taken from Kassim Ahmad's romanization, can most easily be found by consulting my 'A Study of Genre: Form and Meaning in the Malay Hikayat Hang Tuah' (Ph.D. thesis, Cornell, 1975).

That child will become raja of Bukit Seguntang. Among his majesty's grand-children will be rajas great and glorious to the end of time. This is the story of a raja whose kingdom was very large. His majesty's wife was pregnant. When the months were complete, the royal consort gave birth to a girl. Her appearance and demeanour were lovely. In that era no one compared in beauty to that raja's child. The royal couple named her 'Princess Kemala Ratna Pelinggam'. She was reared carefully by the royal couple. After a while, Princess Kemala Ratna Pelinggam had grown. The older she was, the more her beauty increased. Several rajas asked for her hand, but her parents did not want to give her away in marriage, for the rajas who asked for her hand were not of the same nature as his majesty, for his majesty was a raja of heaven. His majesty commanded the Bendahara [chief minister] to summon astrologers and seers. The astrologers and seers came and made obeisance. The raja said to the astrologers and seers, 'Consult the stars: what sort of fate is the lot of my child?'

The first problem in rendering these passages into English is: What to do about tense? Readers of Malay know that Malay verbs do not show tense. When I first began translating passages of *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, I translated into a natural, and therefore temporally complex, English past tense. English has multiple past tenses, not only simple past but present perfect and past perfect, not to mention future perfect and future perfect conditional: layers of relationships in a temporal continuum can be shown through English verbs, in fact almost must be shown in a natural prose style. In translating passages into natural prose, I found myself making judgments about temporal relationships between events in the *hikayat* for which there was simply no evidence in the text; and, too, the prose conveyed the impression that time is layered in the *hikayat*, an impression which is entirely false. It became necessary to translate again into English simple past, using short declarative sentences, as in the original.

Some may view this problem as a simple matter of convention: is tense shown in the language or not? But the difficulty in making judgments about tense, sequence, and therefore time, may be more deeply problematic than that. Professor A.L. Becker pointed out to me in conversation that Austronesian languages, unlike English, do not have a 'narrative presupposition'. That is to say, it is assumed by English speakers that sentences which follow each other in sequence also follow each other in chronological sequence. So, to take an example from the passage quoted above, we tend to assume that the third raja mentioned (the one with the daughter) occurs after the second raja mentioned. In fact, there is no temporal marker. The story could be simultaneous, it could even be before.

That is not to say that temporal relations are never marked — though it is more accurate to say 'sequential relations', I think, than 'temporal' ones. This is done by phrases, frequently used, like *sa-telah sudah itu* and *hatta beberapa lama-nya* — 'after that' and 'after some time' or 'after a while . . .'. These phrases indicate that the incident which is about to be told is subsequent to the one which has just been told. I suspect that the word *segera*, which can be translated 'immediately', has a similar function. In the sentence, for instance, 'Hang Tuah presented the *keris* to the raja and the raja immediately bestowed it upon Hang Tuah', the word *segera* shows that the raja gave the *keris* to Hang Tuah after Hang Tuah had given it to him, rather than showing any haste on the part of the raja. It functions like *lantas* in modern Indonesian. But unless they are specifically marked, sequential relations are not assumed.

It is true that phrases indicating time do make an appearance in the text, phrases like 'the palace was built in forty days' or 'we will leave in thirty days'. It should be remarked first that many of these 'times' are entirely conventional: celebrations of weddings and coronations and the buildings of palaces almost always take forty days in Malay and Indonesian traditional accounts. But even if we take these phrases as accurate reflections of the time it took for an event to occur, there is no way to relate these events in a temporal sequence to other events. The phrases are fragmented and attached to individual events, rather than continuous with each other. Thus their effect is not to place the events within an overarching framework of temporal continuity; rather, the phrases stand with their events almost as adjectives, as attributes or descriptions of the events themselves.

Eventually, in short, it became clear that to ponder the temporal relations between the *hikayat*'s events was to ask the wrong question, and I resorted to translating into short declarative sentences in order to evade those questions as far as possible. But using this style of short declarative sentences, called 'paratactic' by Eric Auerbach,⁴ was as necessary for avoiding linking clauses into logical-causal relations as it was for avoiding making judgments about time; and, after all, Classical Malay prose itself is paratactic. In paratactic styles, sentences tend to consist of simple declaratives, independent clauses linked by coordinate conjunctions. They follow one another 'abruptly', Auerbach writes, to a reader accustomed to the multitude of explanatory linkages characteristic of 'hypotactic' styles. In the latter, relative pronouns and subordinate conjunctions serve to connect sentence elements hierarchically. In them, sentences can be long and complex, for the relations of subordinate clauses to each other and to the main clause can be specified: the clauses

⁴ See his *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (translated from German by W.R. Trask) (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 1953).

can be layered into each other without confusing the reader. Thus the shape of sentences themselves contains an explanation of their contents. Classical Malay has few subordinating devices.⁵ In *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, breaks between clauses are most commonly shown by the word *maka*, which can be translated as 'then' or 'thus' but is usually best left out. *Maka* both holds together these sentences and separates them from one another, but without clarifying the nature of their relationship. The clauses stand next to each other in rows, not fitted into each other like boxes-within-boxes.

Let us leave sentence structure for a moment to see how the story is made. The *hikayat* begins with a prayer to Allah. Then it tells of a (first) king, served by Hang Tuah. It then tells of a (second) king. It then tells of a (third) king, who has a daughter. The relation between these kings is not explained; only some pages later does the reader discover that the second king mentioned married the daughter of the third king mentioned; and only many pages after that does it become apparent that this couple's grandson is the king whom Hang Tuah serves. Like the sentences of which they are made, the story of each raja follows on the one before it.

And at this point we can hardly speak of 'stories', for the rajas are presented through images. Aside from the abrupt transitions between them there is another sense in which the presentation of rajas is not explained: the *hikayat* consists not, in a sense, of narrative, but of a succession of images. After the introductory prayer and statement, we are given an image of a king, who looks to the right and his ministers of the right all bow, and looks to the left and all the ministers of the left bow Then it passes to another image: there is a raja who has a daughter. He calls for astrologers and asks . . . they tell him No pictures or puppets gave a visual dimension to *hikayat*, but like *wayang beber* or *wayang kulit* the *hikayat* is made of images, images brought into being by words. To put it another way, it is true that the medium in which the story is told is words. But the words function not as abstractions explaining events to which they are not intrinsically attached, but rather to bring into being images drawn from the visible world. The images of which the narrative consists have no existence outside the words which bring them into being. They are actually *made of* words, not just *told about* in words.

At the same time, and for the same reason, there is no abstraction. Words do not stand back from the events they recount, explaining or clarifying them. They do not constitute a platform standing outside the images, telling the listeners or readers what the images are about. Just as the images are made of

⁵ The most common are *karena* and *apabila*. *Karena* can usually be translated as 'because' or 'for'. *Apabila* can mean 'if', but is usually in the sense of 'when' or 'in the case that . . .'. The construction *kalau . . . maka* 'if . . . then' which is used in modern Indonesian, particularly in mathematics and engineering, is not found at all in Classical Malay, according to Dr L.F. Brakel (personal communication). *Walaupun* 'although', is an import from Arabic and, if I recollect correctly, is not used in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*.

words, so too does the sense of the words lie wholly in the images which they both convey and constitute. This means that the sense and significance must be conveyed through the images themselves. It is almost as though the story were conveyed entirely through pictures, without verbal commentary. (That is not, in fact, quite the case, but is a more helpful way to approach it than is the assumption that it is, or should be, a narrative which explains itself.) It is apparent to commentators on Southeast Asian texts that the distinction between 'oral' and 'written' can be a hazy one; hazy too, is the distinction between visual and verbal in these passages.

The images of which *Hikayat Hang Tuah* consists, like the sentences which bring them into being, are piled up one after another paratactically. Strings of these images, conventionally clumped together, form the stories which will be familiar to readers of Malay and Indonesian literature and folktales – the story of the king who lost his kingdom through cockfighting, the attack on a kingdom by garfish, the emergence of a prince or princess from a clump of bamboo. The episodes float next to one another, strung together rather than growing out of one another. There is a sense in which the *hikayat* hardly have boundaries: they consist of stories or episodes which floated around the Malay world and were on occasion caught, as it were, by a scribe and given a name.

Thus, as we peruse *hikayat*, we are struck by the amount of repetition and therefore detachability evident at every level. The detachability is evident in the fact that *hikayat* were not necessarily, and perhaps seldom, read from beginning to end when they were recited: favourite or popular episodes could be recited alone. There is also the tendency of copyists to eliminate or add stories to the manuscript they were copying, a tendency well-known and much abhorred by seekers of 'original texts'. Nor is repetition and detachability a feature only between *hikayat*, as it were, but also within *hikayat*. Within *hikayat*, incidents are often repeated in their entirety, as though nothing had gone before. For instance, when Hang Tuah visits foreign ports in Part Two, he is greeted by the harbourmaster, and asked his business; he replies and the harbourmaster is filled with love for him by the sweet words flowing from his mouth. This sequence is recounted in its entirety at the several ports which Hang Tuah visits in the area we call the Middle East. Thus the reader who expects a linear narrative of a story-line finds these repetitions tiresome, as though they were an interference to the story rather than what they are in fact: the story.⁶

Repetition as an element of style has implications for what we might call the nature of dialogue and the presentation of figures. Consider this passage, which is part of the story of the raja of Melaka's setting out to Singapura in

⁶ The usefulness of repetition is discussed by Milman Parry and by Albert Lord, who made famous also the distinction between 'written' and 'oral' traditions. The limitations of an analysis distinguishing sharply between written and oral traditions have recently been debated by folklorists and anthropologists, especially by those who deal with written traditions outside Western ones. I discuss this question in an appendix to this paper.

order to enjoy himself. While in the boat the raja leans over the edge to see a beautiful golden fish and his crown falls off. He calls his retainers together, but only Laksamana (Hang Tuah) volunteers to dive for it. The story continues:

Laksamana readied himself, unsheathed his short *keris*. He made obeisance to the raja and then dropped into the water. He groped around for the crown and found it. He gripped it and was rising to the surface. When he was almost to the boat a white crocodile came, its eyes glowing. The crocodile seized the *keris* out of Laksamana's hand. Laksamana was startled. The crown in his hand slipped down into the water again. Laksamana followed the crocodile and grabbed the animal. Laksamana was carried along by the descending animal. Laksamana was weak. Laksamana suddenly let go of the crocodile. The people inside the boat were in an uproar, saying that Laksamana had been captured by a crocodile. His majesty was enormously sorrowful about Laksamana. Then Laksamana rose to the surface, got into the boat, and made obeisance to his majesty. His majesty said, 'Hai Laksamana, where is Laksamana's *keris*, I do not see it'. Laksamana answered, 'My lord, your servant begs forgiveness and favour. Your servant groped around for the crown of the Lord of the World, found it and was carrying it up. When almost to the boat, a white crocodile came, and seized in its mouth your humble servant's *keris*. Your servant was startled. The crown slipped from your servant's hand. Your servant pursued the white crocodile and held it fast. It was descending, carrying your servant with it. Your servant was weak. Then your servant rose to the surface. So it is with your servant, save for the forgiveness and favour of the Lord of the World. Perhaps it is the will of Allah for his servant.' Said his majesty, 'I saw Laksamana rise to the surface with the crown. In my opinion, let the crown be. For what can we do? Let alone the crown, nay, if it were something yet more valuable than the crown I would not count it equal to Laksamana'.

You will notice that the story of how the crown and *keris* were lost is related in almost the same words as those which Hang Tuah uses to relate how the crown and *keris* were lost. In other words, there is no effort to imitate dialogue, to create voices which are idiosyncratic and can therefore be identified with individual characters. Each figure's speech is appropriate to his function in the story: the function of hero, the function of king, the function of minister, the function of traitor. The speech is not an imitation of dialogue or an expression of an individuated identity, whose opinions and conversation grow out of an inner idiosyncratic impulse. We do not have characters, competing voices with different versions of the world, working themselves out in a dynamic

called 'plot'. This feature is characteristic of *hikayat* style, and one result is that the same figures (functions) recur with different names in different *hikayat*: there is nothing to attach a particular figure to a particular voice or name. And if the individuated voices of characters do not intrude, no less is it true that the voice of an author does not intrude; the narrator's opinions, views — voice, in short — is as invisible as that of the *hikayat*'s figures. It is true then that most *hikayat* are anonymous, but their anonymity is more profound than is revealed in the fact that we do not know their authors' names: they are structurally anonymous.

Coherence and Perspective in the Style of History

Implicitly and sometimes explicitly, I have been arguing that the ways in which the events of the past are organized and conceptualized and set down in historical writing are alien to the organization of *hikayat*. While this is, I believe, quite true, it is too narrow a conception of historical writing, for the genre contains not only assumptions about the arrangement of the events of the past but also assumptions about the place and meaning of audience and of author, and therefore of the meaning of the past. I will, I hope, make this clearer by drawing on the arguments made by Nancy Struever in her *The Language of History in the Renaissance*.⁷

Medieval chroniclers set down the events of the past, sometimes yearly, sometimes at larger intervals. But these chronicles do not usually constitute 'history' because there is little discrimination between events which modern historians consider important or unimportant; because causal relations are absent or undeveloped; and because temporal sequences are fragmented or apparently random. How, then, did the modern genre 'history' develop?

Professor Struever sees modern historical writing as emerging through the use of rhetoric in the Italian city-states of the Renaissance. Rhetors in fourteenth century Florence wrote with a moral purpose; they wrote about the nature of the state and about political events in order to convince their audiences about the proper course of action. In order to do this they arranged events of the past in causal chains which showed the consequence of having this type of city-state or that, this type of ruler or that, this policy or another one. Different rhetors had different convictions; some argued for democracy, others for a republic, others for a just dictator. But the format of their narratives was similar, narratives telling of events causing one another. So much is obviously a 'historical' style.

But note too: rhetors were known, the authors were known, they cultivated their own style and voice. The skillful rhetor was distrusted, for he could take events and shape them to suit his own argument. There emerged

⁷ N. Struever, *The Language of History in the Renaissance* (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 1970).

at this time, Struever argues, a consciousness of interpretation and selection, and this intentionality of the author is intrinsic to the form because its function is to clarify and convince. To contrast it with Medieval chronicles: they appear jumbled in part because they were intended to record events, not argue about them; any order of being recorded was sufficient.

Note too that the purpose of this exercise — of the rhetors' works — was to convince an audience; it existed for no other purpose, it was a secular art. In contrast with this we might think of Javanese *wayang kulit*, which is 'non-compulsive'. *Wayang* is not created to grip and hold an audience's attention from beginning to end; rather, audiences drift in and out, attending the parts that most interest them or which happen to be going on when they are in the vicinity. *Wayang kulit* is a rite which can be performed (and is, on a hill outside Malang) without a human audience. It exists in itself, and an audience can gather round, or not. Without an audience, however, there was no reason to write history in Florence.

Struever argues that the very status and meaning of language itself began to change for the West in that era. Rhetoric was distrusted because in it language stood apart from the events it recounted and as such could be made to say what the rhetors wanted. Language became divorced from truth, a vehicle for mere intention. Thus language could eventually be seen as artificial, standing apart from the reality of the world, which it could at best only imitate or represent.

Further Notes

If the genre history is an argument, if it contains a thesis, it must be understood. Thus a historical work is not only the product of a single mind but also must be held in a single mind if it is to succeed in convincing. The genre requires that understanding be cognitive: how A caused B, and B caused C; how each part contributes to the over-all shape of the argument, and why the conclusion reached was all but inevitable. Such a text contains, intrinsic to its style, a criterion of relevance and of aesthetic beauty: that its elements must proceed out of one another and must contribute to the shape of the whole. Each step must be made explicit, and all that does not contribute must be ruthlessly stripped away, for the argument suffers or becomes incomprehensible if parts are deleted or added.

Thus there is an intrinsic abstraction in history: events are understood not 'in themselves', but because of their place in an imaginary causal-temporal line, the line of 'time'. The relative pronouns and subordinate conjunctions characteristic of English prose serve to do this at the level of syntax: I suspect that these elements — although, because, whereas, due to, which, since — with which we habitually link clauses and phrases and implicitly refer to the sentences or events which went before, are parallel to our notion of linear time in which we habitually link events. Both allow us to understand the significance of events by reference to something outside themselves, by their place in an imaginary continuum. In syntax, then, there is an implicit understanding of the way that events are put together.

The notion of 'time' not only requires abstraction, it also requires, I believe, a point of view. That is, to view the events of the past as arranged in lines which result in the present is to make the present into a privileged point. Just as in the individual myths called autobiography and psychoanalysis we reconstruct the past to result in ourselves, so also in 'history' the present becomes the point from which to arrange and assess the relevance of past events, the significance of which could hardly have been understood at the time they happened. Time, like the abstraction of hypotactic styles, provides a point of view outside events from which to view their significance. From the present, the past can be seen as a whole, in all its confusion and multiplicity of factors and purposes.

Or, to put it another way: *historical narrative has a 'meanwhile . . .'*. From the distant peak of present perspective, the author, and with him the reader, can look down on the strands of events which in a tangled mass form 'the past', can discern where they touched each other and, as a consequence, resulted in yet other strands which touched yet others, and eventually became The Present. Only a lofty distance allows this 'meanwhile'. The world of the past thus stands apart from reader and author alike, an object for inspection. This style in novels is called the 'style of the omniscient author' — the motives and actions of characters in different places, which are all unknown to each other, are known by the writer. Albeit put forth with the utmost modesty and judicious qualifications, historical writing requires this voice, for intrinsic to the genre is that one voice puts together these events, makes sense of them and presents them to the reader. I have previously argued that the genre *hikayat* is intrinsically anonymous, even if we know the author. Conversely, historical writings intrinsically have an author, an authorial voice, even if we do not know the name.

In hikayat there is no meanwhile. Events are temporally flat, recounted when they come up. This means that the world cannot be seen as a distant object, separate from the reader. To be 'understood', it must be taken as it is, when it comes. Its shape can be likened to a painting on a temple wall. If you stand back and view it from a distance it is a confused and unintelligible mass, simply because there is no perspective, no privileged point of view from which it all makes sense. To follow the story you must go up close and take each bit as it comes: ah, here is Sita being stolen, here are Hanuman's legions, here is the palace being burned. Only by collapsing the distance between yourself and the story, literally by going up close to it, can the story be followed. From a distance it is senseless. Its construction, I believe, is similar to or perhaps identical with that of the Javanese *wayang beber*. In *wayang beber*, a scroll with pictures is unfolded while the *dalang* (narrator) tells a story. There is no way of conveying 'meanwhile'. It is both temporally and pictorially flat.

As the listener is carried into each image in the narrative, what happens and what is said in each frame is repeated in its entirety. This is one reason that *hikayat*, like *wayang*, are non-compulsive: each event is retold in its entirety, hence is separable from what went before. As in life, today's events

are not abbreviated merely because they have occurred before. If we stand back from the text to view it as a whole, this style is 'repetitious'. From the inside, as the story is being told, it is merely what happens. Again, to be repetitious myself, there is no perspective from which to abbreviate the narrative. Without a privileged end point, there is no criterion for abbreviating, for stripping away the irrelevant.

The Past

Until this point I have argued that the orientations basic to the genre history, especially those called 'time' and 'subjectivity', are not assumed in *hikayat*. If only from this fact, it will be apparent on reflection that the relations between the past, the text and the audience must be profoundly different in the two genres. I would like now to make some comments on the relation of the past to humans and the meaning of *hikayat* in that relation.

Hikayat were written, but they were written to be read aloud in a public place. As such, they are better considered notes for a performance than texts to be read in quiet solitude. People listened to, rather than read, *hikayat*. They were attracted into its realm through the voice of the narrator, which carried (*membawa*) and brought into being the *hikayat*.

Not uncommonly, the reading of *hikayat* is one of the events related in *hikayat*. *Sejarah Melayu*, for instance, tells of a *hikayat* being read when the Portugese attacked Melaka. One particularly sinister passage in *Hikayat Hang Tuah* which marks the beginning of Hang Jebat's treason tells of Hang Jebat, asked by the raja to recite *hikayat*. His sweet clear melodious voice melts the hearts of listeners and renders them inexpressibly tender; the raja falls asleep on Hang Jebat's lap; and the palace women are inspired by lust and throw him betel-nuts and perfume from behind a screen. It is not only in the reading of *hikayat* in which we hear of the power of words or sounds. We read of Hang Tuah visiting distant lands and the words flow from his mouth sweet as honey, and those around him feel love. The almost palpable physical imagery of the words flowing from his mouth points to their active presence in the world: they do not stand apart from the world, explaining it or representing it, but are a presence and have an effect in the world. Throughout the *hikayat* the imagery of sound and silence is pervasive. To *berdiam* is both to remain silent and to do nothing. Of someone who is helpless the *hikayat* says: *tidak kata-kata lagi* (he spoke no more). Hang Tuah himself is wounded by the Portugese near the end of the *hikayat*, and he falls overboard to be retrieved quickly by his compatriots. The *hikayat* does not describe his wounds or the blood. Its significance falls upon us, rather, as we hear that for three days and three nights he cannot speak.

One could argue that these images were used by the compiler of the text as metaphors, or for literary purposes peculiar to this *hikayat*. But I do not think so. For one thing, these images are not peculiar to this *hikayat* but are common to other texts of the same period (and it is worth remarking, too, that *hikayat* are not constructed through metaphors, although *pantun* are often made entirely of them). Further, if we step outside the world created by the *hikayat* into what we designate the real world, we find that in Indonesia and Malaysia power is assumed to emanate from formed sounds, whether of words in spells, or the reading of sacred texts, or of *gamelan* music, or of the music, voices, and sounds in *wayang kulit*. Clifford Geertz has written that in *wayang kulit* 'meaning' and 'feeling' are the same. For the meaning of *wayang kulit* is in changing the inner state of the person, and the 'logic' of its 'plot' (to use words which are inappropriate — but what can one do? no words are available which are not weighed down with an alien epistemology) is to draw the audience into a state of greater inner calm and spiritual power.⁸ In classical Malay the word *bunyi* meant the sound of words, the meaning of words, and their effect on listeners. The experience of listening was an experience of feeling and of meaning, of having the inner state affected. It was not a purely cognitive 'understanding'.

These examples might be regarded by some as mere art forms, decorations, as it were, on the hard realities of, say, 'social structure'. But those who have studied the traditional Malay world have some glimpses of the importance of *bahasa*, which can most crudely be translated as 'language'. Even in Malaysia now the word has broader connotations: it means good manners and correct behaviour, and the phrase 'baik budi bahasa' or even just 'baik bahasanya' is still used as a commendation. Western anthropologists have had difficulty in finding 'social structure', as traditionally conceived in anthropology, in Malaysia (indeed, throughout Southeast Asia). It seems to me that if there is a notion which could replace 'social structure' and which is, in a peculiar sense, analogous to it, in the traditional Malay world, it is *bahasa*. *Bahasa* defined the shape of human relations, for to know *bahasa* was to know respect, proper manners and the way to address people; and it was surely a sign of the inner spiritual power which is the precondition for attracting followers (and thereby forming 'groups') throughout the kingdoms and former kingdoms of Southeast Asia. Especially in the court, there could be no gap between language and behaviour, for proper behaviour was to address people properly, according to rank and relative status, in attractive and flowing phrases, increasingly formulaic as the upper echelons were approached. (No letter or petition to the raja, for instance,

⁸ C. Geertz, 'Ethos, World View, and the Analysis of Sacred Symbols', *The Antioch Review*, 17, iv (1957) pp. 421-37.

could be conveyed without standard respectful preliminaries; indeed, there is no reason to think of them as preliminaries rather than as substance.) But I suspect that it is not in grammar or groups that *bahasa* could be located, but in ordered sounds and the inner state of people.

Humans themselves are connected to and through *bahasa* because they live in it and because they are spoken about. Again and again, in *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, people do or do not do things for the sake of their *nama* (name, reputation, title). The desire to be spoken about, for one's *nama* to be mentioned in other countries and by people in the last age, becomes what we can only translate as a 'motive' for action. The Princess Kemala Ratna Pelinggam, the first princess mentioned in the *hikayat*, is sent to a distant island because it is prophesied that she will meet a prince, marry him, and her grandchildren will be great rajas. In sending her away, her parents say to her: 'We do this not because we hate you but so that our *nama* will be famous to the last age'. We might say: 'so that we enter history', or 'so that we will be remembered'; but the *hikayat* never uses 'remembered' or 'thought about', but always 'mentioned' or 'told about'. The Bendahara does not carry out his own raja's order to kill Hang Tuah, because his *nama* in the last age is even more important. It is put most explicitly when, near the *hikayat*'s beginning, the raja of Bukit Seguntang gives away his son to be raja of Bentan. He says to him when he leaves:

Oh my child, fruit of my heart, you are now on top of a kingdom.
Care for your commoners and look after your soldiers. Do not
be arrogant and angry, for this world will not endure, except for a
good *nama* which will endure beyond death, so that the *nama* of
your ancestors and my *nama* will be spoken in all foreign lands.

Thus, to be spoken about in future ages provides an impulse for actions, drawing the *hikayat*'s figures into the future. And the preoccupation with being spoken about is not peculiar to this *hikayat*, but is a common theme. This desire, though, does not link the different parts of the *hikayat* to each other — that is, later episodes do not say, 'and so their desire to be told about was fulfilled'. The desire, rather, links the story being told to the present of its telling. For, having the story told is to have it fulfil itself. In this way, the *hikayat* does not so much record the past as bring it into being or perpetuate it. The fleeting, one might almost say random, events of individual lives and kingdoms are transformed by ordered sounds into what, it is true, is not permanent, but is the only perpetuity which this world offers. One begins to feel, in reading *hikayat*, that the idea that the world is real and words or language artificial, is reversed in traditional Malaya where, if anything, *bahasa* was real, solid, present and almost palpable, while the world was something which would not endure.

What then, in the end, can we say about the relation of the past and *hikayat*? The form in which that question is posed intrudes into any possible direct answer, for when those with a historical consciousness ask such a question, we imagine 'the past' as a structured and sequential whole. If *hikayat* in general had a relationship to the past, thus conceived, in general, then we would expect that the genre of *hikayat* would present us with a consistent 'way of viewing the past'. Such is not the case. Of course, it is possible to claim that the royal genealogies which form the framework of some *hikayat* are an analogue of 'time'. And because of this analogy, some commentators see such *hikayat* as more coherent and 'historical' than *hikayat* like *Hang Tuah* and *Merong Mahawangsa*. But *hikayat* of the latter type do not strike commentators even as history *manqué*, for events identifiable as historical are rare in them. Indeed, a wide range of subject matter comes to us in the form of *hikayat*, from ribald tales, to stories of heroes, to genealogies of kings, to recountings of events which happened in the historical past. This fact suggests that 'the past' did not have a special status within the genre *hikayat*.⁹

The way in which historical events may be preserved in *hikayat* can be seen in an example from *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. This *hikayat* is conventionally divided into two major parts. Part One has no identifiable historical events at all, although the kingdoms of Melaka and Majapahit are imagined as great kingdoms. But Part Two includes two events, both important in the *hikayat*'s meaning, which did happen in the historical past, the Portugese capture of Melaka and the journey of a delegation of Malays to Turkey in order to obtain cannon. But, significantly for our purposes, their order of retelling in the *hikayat* is opposite to the order they occurred in history. Historians tell us that such events happened, and they therefore have, to our understanding, an objective existence. But in the *hikayat* (unlike their place in historical writing), these events do not stand *outside* the *hikayat* as something *referred to*, but rather as material which the *hikayat* uses, much as it might use a tale of a raja losing his kingdom in a cockfight. Depleted of their historicity, they are absorbed by the *hikayat* into its own substance, for its own purposes. I have said that there is a temporal flatness within the style of *hikayat*. There is a temporal flatness, too, in the relation of *hikayat* to historical events. Distant and contemporary events are of equal stature, as material, and their arrangement 'in time' may be a matter of indifference.

⁹ It suggests also that the subject matter suitable for *hikayat* is not easily given boundaries. While I do not have the historical knowledge to make this assertion with certainty, I have come to think of *hikayat* as a name not for a kind of content but for the circumstances of performance. For instance, many tales are similar in *hikayat* and in the stories of *penglipur lara*, village storytellers. The difference lies not in the content but in the fact that *hikayat* were recited from written texts in the court, while the tales are told from memory in villages.

And how could it be otherwise? — when we imagine the way in which such events must have been conveyed. Surely the source of most *hikayat* material was not 'the past' or even 'events' conceived in any unmediated form, but rather other *hikayat*, stories, Persian tales This was certainly true even of *hikayat* which appear more historical because they are structured around genealogies. The genealogies themselves may, or may not, be accurate accounts of genealogies of kings; but the stories which fill them in, which hang on their branches as it were, are often stories which are found in other *hikayat*.

And yet: many stories which can be said to have a historical referent do appear in many *hikayat*. This fact, after all, prompted us to consider the relation between the texts called 'hikayat' and the events called 'history' in the first place. Can we then propose, if hesitatingly, some formulation of the relation between them? Our thoughts might be something like this. The form-giving elements in the life of traditional Malay courts were intimately linked to ordered sounds. We have on the other hand events which happen in the world. *Hikayat* and other such forms convert the impermanent and transitory events of this world into something which endures, at least as it is spoken. Or rather, they do not so much convert transitory events as perpetuate them, carry them into the present of their telling. *Hikayat* do not create monuments of either stone or of literature, but only perpetuate in a form which must be continually renewed to endure. I have come to think of the relation as rather analogous to that of noise and *gamelan* music. Individual sounds, like individual events, are merely noise. *Gamelan* takes these and gives them a form which itself transforms human states, has an effect in the world. Like *gamelan* music, this form cannot be located in a score or a text; like *gamelan* music, it is not a content but an arrangement and performance; like *gamelan* music, its end does not grow out of its beginning. The past is just like noise; for traditional Malays it did not have an objective existence which had to be investigated in itself, but it stood, rather, as the material, the raw substance, which could be converted into sensible form.

APPENDIX

Repetition in the 'Parry-Lord Thesis'

Although the Parry-Lord theory has had a great deal of influence on the study of folklore in American anthropology and an even greater one on Homeric scholarship in the English-speaking world, and the issues they and their commentators raise are certainly of importance to any students of a literature which is not perpetuated only by individuals reading it in private silence, I have not to my recollection seen the work of Parry and Lord mentioned in any commentary on Malay or Indonesian literature. It is therefore perhaps worth outlining the main thesis briefly here. Through a close analysis of the style of Homer, Milman Parry concluded that the *Iliad* was originally an oral epic, and in the 1930s set out to Yugoslavia, which at that time still had a living tradition of oral epic, in order to see how such epics were composed and conveyed. After Parry's death, Albert Lord wrote a book called *The Singer of Tales*, which develops what has come to be called 'the Parry-Lord theory'.¹ In it repetition is seen as a device by which 'the bard', who is composing and singing the tale at the same time, can more easily remember and compose. (Although the tale may be told many times, it is not memorized, so that there is an element of composition in every retelling.) The composer uses a multitude of ready-made phrases, both so that he can rest from composition and also so that he has a few moments to compose the next line. Standard phrases are of known metrical value, and can be chosen depending on the metrical requirements of the line being sung. Standard phrases continually recur, and lines may be repeated in the telling, giving the composer a chance to catch his breath, as it were. From this it is an easy step to assume, as many commentators on Parry and Lord have done, that oral and written traditions are necessarily distinct in that dimension and others, and that oral traditions are necessarily repetitious.

It would seem to me that the implication of this theory is to see repetition as a result of the requirements of technique. 'If only the singers were writing instead of singing, they would not have to use all this repetition and conventional phrasing; their compositions could be linear and each image fresh; but because they are oral, they are forced into this particular form' — the theory seems to say. Regardless of the way facts may speak to the argument (and anthropologists are continually coming up with examples of

¹ Albert Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, Harvard U.P., 1960). See also Milman Parry, *The Making of Homeric Verse: the Collected Poems of Milman Parry* (edited by Adam Parry) (Oxford, Clarendon, 1971).

oral traditions which are memorized and not repetitious, and of written traditions which are repetitious), the theory is entirely from the point of view of the composer. The effect and meaning of such styles is not considered. In this paper I hope to suggest that the reasons for such stylistic elements as repetition are due at least as much to epistemology as to technology.

It does seem to me, however, that some of the issues raised in these debates could be profitably discussed in the study of Southeast Asian texts. These texts have long been treated as texts, in the sense that historical writings in the West are texts, as though their nature, function, and perpetuation were by that fact transparent. It is worth asking, I think, questions which one would not generally ask of a 'text': how they were transmitted; what their sources were and how they were come upon; the meaning and function of writing in the society; and the meaning of words, sounds, and language — in a particular era and social context.

THE TURNING IMAGE: MYTH & REALITY IN MALAY PERCEPTIONS OF THE PAST

A.H. Johns

Most traditional Malay literature has a bad name. Not only does it appear to lack interest, but even its genres are difficult to elucidate. Western categories such as romance, ballad, fable, chronicle or history do not correspond sufficiently closely to any literary product in Malay to be meaningful, even though at first sight they appear to be acceptable translations — at least in some contexts — of words such as *hikayat*, *syair*, *cerita*, *silsilah* or *sejarah*.

Snellgrove remarks somewhere that one of the reasons why Tibetan tea has such a bad name among Europeans is that it is called 'tea'. The word 'tea' arouses certain expectations as to flavour, odour, colour, consistency and function to which Tibetan tea is an affront. In a similar manner, the word 'literature' and the name of any genre of Western letters, together with the sight and feel of a book that it evokes, arouses expectations that what appears to be a Malay counterpart does not satisfy. And in particular when a work in Malay has a title such as *sejarah* or *silsilah* and sometimes *hikayat*, suggesting that it is intended to present information, in narrative prose, about the past as it really was, the European reader who brings to it his own preconceptions of serial time, individuality and literary structure may well be perplexed.

The fact is that the worlds of different peoples have different shapes — not for every cultural community does time appear to have a constant unidirectional flow, life and death to be mutually exclusive, space to conform to Euclidean geometry, or causation to be explicable in terms of Aristotelian logic. Thus it is misleading to assume that in any of these respects the shape of the world perceived by the predominantly peasant, shamanistic peoples of the Malay world, has a more than tangential relationship to that which we perceive, despite their experience of the same life cycle we all share.

The problem then is a very real one, because an older tradition of scholarship which is still influential has used English terms to identify the literary products of this region in a way that gives the impression that they are simply counterparts to those of Western culture, which, when measured by its standards, can confidently be judged inferior.

A new series of problems arises and the issues become more difficult to disentangle when, in the wake of decolonization and the aspiring thrust in new Asian nations to take over and use for developmental purposes the educational tools of the Graeco-Western world, the shape of that past — the Asian past — both as it was, and as it was beheld by the people who lived in it, has contemporary Western models imposed upon it, and its outlines, articulations and dynamisms suffer distortion. Another confusing and frustrating aspect of this

field of study is the variety of world-shapes that can be detected in the cultural products of this past, often in unstable and constantly changing combinations, rendering any generalization perilous.

Thus when the bluff, no-nonsense approach of an Anglo-Saxon mind, exemplified by a scholar of the distinction of R.O. Winstedt, confronts these products, it is forced to the following summation of their character:

The germ of every Malay romance is a folk-tale or cluster of folk-tales, nearly always Indian, and manipulated by men wildly ignorant and intolerant of the unities of place and time and of historical truth.¹

with the implication that in no kind of narrative, whether purporting to be factual or fictitious, does the 'Malay' mind appear endowed with a sense of time or chronology.

Thus he explains the transposition of the episode of the marriage with a fairy princess of one ruler of Melaka (Mansur Shah 1459-1477) in an early rescension of the *Malay Annals*, to another (Mahmud Shah 1488-1511) in a later one, as follows:

While the original author, writing in the reign of Sultan Mahmud, last Sultan of Malacca, could not possibly ascribe to that ruler the fool errand of wooing the fairy princess of Mt Ophir, the Johor editor, seeing that Sultan Mansur was already the hero of fictitious marriages with a princess of Majapahit and a princess of China, thought it better to deprive him of his fairy wooing and ascribe it to Sultan Mahmud who by 1612 had been dead eighty-two years.²

'Men wildly ignorant' is an extreme phrase to castigate a people simply because they do not share a particular Western sense of the shape of time; not only are there numerous attitudes to the past in the non-Western world, but the conceptualization of time and the meaning of history which Winstedt uses as a norm to upbraid the luckless Malays is a relative new-comer even on the Western scene. For the European sense of history — which includes the capacity to take a 'privileged position' from which to behold the past, the ability to distinguish one event from another as being more or less remote in time, as being more or less relevant to the present, and in addition a conception of individuality dependent on particularity of time and place — such a bundle of

¹ R.O. Winstedt, 'A History of Classical Malay Literature', *JMBRAS*, 31, iii (1958) p. 60.

² *Ibid.*, p. 130.

perspectives, although it is characteristic of modern European historiography, is not older than the late Renaissance. For it is a fact that shapes and models of the world change, whether through their own dynamics, outside pressures or new scientific discoveries.³

A complementary aspect of such a change of model or 'shape' of the world is the change in the perception of history that accompanies it. Up to the mid-seventeenth century, Foucault remarks:

history was the inextricable and completely unitary fabric of all that was visible of things and of signs that had to be discovered or lodged in them The history of a living being was that being itself, within the whole semantic network that connected it to the world. The division, so evident to us, between what we see, what others have observed and handed down, and what others imagine or naively believe, the great tripartition, apparently so simple and so immediate, into *Observation*, *Document* and *Fable*, did not exist. This was not because science was hesitating between a rational vocation and the vast weight of naive tradition, but for the much more precise and much more constraining reason that signs were then part of things themselves, whereas in the seventeenth century they became modes of representation.⁴

Foucault of course is indulging in special pleading: the cleavage between 'mediaeval' and 'modern' is not so clear cut as he suggests, and problems he refers to were faced, with varying degrees of success, in other traditions: the Confucian, the Buddhist and, as we shall see later, the Arabo-Islamic. What is important here is to realize that we face not a single difficulty, but a cluster of problems — one of them derives from a qualitative difference between the twentieth century European and seventeenth century Malay perception of the past, and the need to understand the cultural products of the Malay world of that time in terms of the shapes in which that world was perceived by the minds that generated these products, the competing character of some of these shapes, and the kinds of compromises, combinations and miscegenations that ensued; another is the need to be on the alert for any independent, detached comment on that world and its past, expressing an individual viewpoint; yet a third is to judge the effectiveness of the imposition of the ideas and structure of current Western models of historiographic thought upon the various traditional distributions of intellectual and literary activity in the region.

³ C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge, Cambridge U.P., 1964) gives a lucid picture of the 'medieval model' — the shape of the universe as perceived in medieval times, which was maintained in literature until confidently rejected in the 17th century. Chapter 8, pp. 198-215, of this work is of special interest.

⁴ M. Foucault, *The Order of Things* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1970) p. 129.

Unless one is a folk-lorist, the most useful starting point for a discussion of writing in Malay that has to do with the past is to be found in the courts of the maritime city states where Malay was the official language. It does not follow from this that everything preserved in the courts was of court origin, or that everything in Malay was written by 'ethnic Malays', or even necessarily for 'ethnic Malays' — a point we shall develop later. Winstedt draws attention to this in his chapter on Malay Histories when he says of his beloved *Malay Annals*: 'perhaps the polyglot author was a half-caste Tamil'.⁵ While the expression is unfortunate and Winstedt does not develop any idea from it, the observation touches an important issue: the relation between indigenous and foreign elements in the Malay port towns and the kinds of interaction that took place between them.

In short, the situation is a confused one, and its elements are not easily reduced to order. But between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries I believe that it is possible to distinguish three principal world shapes in writings in Malay, themselves subject to further refinement. These are: an ethnic Malay shape, an Indo-Persian shape, and an Arabo-Islamic shape.

Winstedt's category of 'Histories' serves as a useful starting point. It is relevant to the theme of this book; it is further, Winstedt claims, 'from its very subject matter more indigenous than any other type of Malay prose'.⁶ (Although this rather artlessly begs the meaning of 'indigenous'.)

The *Sejarah Melayu* — usually referred to in English as the *Malay Annals*⁷ — is a work concerned with the dynastic legitimation of the Sultanate of Melaka (1400-1511), the preservation of Malay ceremonial tradition, and the listing of rulers of the Melakan line, and has by convention been regarded as the masterpiece of Malay historiography. It is interspersed with numerous anecdotes that are not organically related to the text, and often make the thread of narrative difficult to follow. While not of direct value for the study of Malay history, it is an important cultural document, tintured with the dyes of the several cultural influences and world-shapes that we have suggested as being present in the region.

In attempting to assess it, we are handicapped by the absence both of an established text and of exhaustive critical analysis of its contents. Form criticism for example, applied to many of its episodes, could add to our understanding of the way in which it was compiled. Marrison has drawn attention to features that appear to show Persian influence — its division into chapters, Persian loan words in its vocabulary, the occasional Persian as well as Arabic citations, and the reference to Persian or Arabic literary works.⁸ The crucial question is whether such Persian influence is profound or superficial.

⁵ Winstedt, p. 132.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁷ R.O. Winstedt (ed.), 'The Malay Annals', *JMBRAS*, 16, iii (1938); and translated by C.C. Brown, 'Sejarah Melayu', *JMBRAS*, 25, ii & iii (1952).

⁸ G.E. Marrison, 'Persian Influences in Malay Life', *JMBRAS*, 28, i (1955) pp. 52-69.

We appear to be on firmer ground when we move from Melaka to Aceh (Acheh), a state which reached its apogee in the first half of the seventeenth century. Schrieke's research suggests that Aceh was influenced to a significant degree by the Indo-Persian world-shape, pointing out that the Acehnese court based its administrative structure on that of the Mughal empire.⁹ It is certainly the case that manuscripts of Malay language versions of Persian works popular in the Mughal court date from this period,¹⁰ and it has been argued that the *Hikayat Aceh*,¹¹ a Malay work of the Acehnese court eulogizing Aceh's greatest ruler Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), is a conscious attempt to produce a Malay counterpart to the *Akbar Nama*, a biography extravagant in its praise of the emperor Akbar (1556-1605), by his minister Abu'l-Fazl.

Teuku Iskandar argues strongly for a direct relationship of this kind. Were it to be proved, it could indicate a very striking measure of Indo-Persian influence on the Acehnese court, perhaps even to the extent of showing that the unknown author of the *Hikayat Aceh* knew the *Akbar Nama* and, seeing his ruler Iskandar as another Akbar, discovered in him and his court the contours of an Indo-Persian world-shape.

Teuku Iskandar bases his argument for a relationship of this kind between the two works on a series of episodes in the *Hikayat Aceh* which he claims were put there consciously to serve as counterparts to the career of Akbar in the *Akbar Nama*.¹²

A detailed examination of three of the parallelisms he cites is sufficient. The first is that in the *Akbar Nama* (AN), Akbar completed his studies at the age of four, and that in the *Hikayat Aceh* (HA) Iskandar Muda completed his studies at the age of thirteen.

The relevant passages of the texts follow below.

Of the Acehnese prince, the HA says:

When he was thirteen, his grandfather employed a *faqih* to teach him to recite the Qur'an, and to read religious texts. The *faqih* accepted the charge, because he knew full well the abilities of the future king, his intelligence, wisdom and eloquence. His grandfather had gold and pinchbeck slates prepared and ordered that all his companions study with him so that each should feel the urge to outdo each other,

⁹ B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies* (The Hague, W. van Hoeve, 1957) Vol. II, pp. 251-3.

¹⁰ Winstedt, 'History', pp. 73, 114 & 88.

¹¹ Teuku Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh* ('s-Gravenhage, 1958).

¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 22-3. Note that the reference in footnote 24 on p. 23 should be to p. 519.

and compete in mastering the lessons. The prince learned all that the *faqih* could teach him in a few months. All the other teachers were astonished and came into the grandfather's presence and assured him that no child of a *mufti* in Mecca and Medina had ever mastered his studies so swiftly.¹³

Of the young Akbar, the AN says:

... this scholar of the Divine Academy and graduate of God's college was, in compliance with use and wont, taken to man's school on 7th Shawwal of this year, 20th November, 1547, being the fourth year, fourth month and fourth day of the eternity-conjoined life of his Majesty the Shahinshah. The weighty office was conferred on the Mullazada Mulla (teacher the son of a teacher) 'Asamu-d-din Ibrahim. Though in the eyes of the superficial his Majesty was taken to be taught, yet according to the view of the far-seeing he was carried to the lofty position of teacher. A strange thing was that his Majesty Jahanbani, who was acquainted with celestial sciences and versed in the mysteries of the stars, had fixed, in consultation with acute astrologers and time-knowing astrolabeconners, a special hour for the initiative of his Majesty's instruction, such as might happen once during cycles and lifetimes, but when the master-moment arrived that scholar of God's school had attired himself for sport and had disappeared! In spite of all endeavours and of sedulous search on the part of royalty, no trace of him could be found. The enlightened-hearted perceived from this wondrous mystery that the design was that this lord of lofty wisdom and special pupil of God should not be implicated and commingled with ordinary human learning, so that at the time of the revelation of this *Khedive* of subtlety it might be apparent to mankind that the knowledge of this king of knowers was of the nature of a gift, and not of an acquirement.¹⁴

The second parallelism is between an episode in which Iskandar Muda at the age of twelve kills a wild buffalo, and one in which Akbar, at the age of twelve years and eight months, kills an antelope. The HA gives an extended coverage of the episode, introducing it in the traditional Malay way: *Kata sahib al-hikayat* — thus tells the story teller:

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 149-50 (abridged).

¹⁴ H. Beveridge (tr.), *Akbar Nama of Abu-l-Fazl* (Rare Books Delhi-7, 1972) Vol I, p. 519.

When he was twelve, the young Iskandar was told of a buffalo that had killed and injured many people. He set out with his followers towards the place where the buffalo was to be found. His party was met by an old Batak who offered the prince his services in the traditional way:

'Where does your royal highness wish to disport himself?
What the mountains you wish to climb,
What the plains you wish to cross.'

One of Iskandar's followers, Sabtu replied that they were hunting this wild buffalo. The Batak replied that he could save the royal party the trouble. He knew the buffalo and had the same smell as it. All he needed was a javelin and a *keris*. Iskandar was suspicious, but his follower Sabtu could not restrain himself, saying that for the past two days he had smelt the roasting flesh of the buffalo in the mountains, and had been sharpening his teeth in anticipation of devouring its head. Iskandar then, against his better judgement, accepted the offer, and Sabtu handed over to the Batak his own javelin and *keris*. But as might have been expected, the Batak simply ran off with the weapons and another follower said to Sabtu: 'Look at that Batak. He's tricked us, and blunted your teeth. You sharpened them in vain'. Sabtu shouted out, choking with anger: 'Hey you dog-eating Batak, where are you running with my javelin?' The party burst out laughing at Sabtu's simple-mindedness. Iskandar smiled, and as Sabtu grew increasingly enraged, undertook to kill the buffalo himself, despite the pleas of his followers. He took a spear, and hurled it between the animal's shoulder blades, slaying it.¹⁵

The AN says of its hero:

On this day, and while on the march His Majesty the Shahinshah struck a nilagao (an antelope, *portax pictus*) with his sword and took it as a prey so that the huntsmen were surprised, while the acute obtained a sign of his capturing the booty of a sublime intention, and were made glad.¹⁶

The third parallelism is between an episode in which Iskandar Muda kills a tiger and one in which Akbar kills a snake.

¹⁵ Iskandar, *Hikajat Atjeh*, pp. 146-9 (abridged).

¹⁶ Beveridge, *Akbar Nama*, p. 634.

The HA says:

On one occasion the prince (i.e. the young Iskandar) went out on an elephant catching expedition. His grandfather became nervous, and decided to set out to bring him back. The prince, having heard that his grandfather was on the way to the forest, decided to go to meet him with his aide Setia Rimba. Now Setia Rimba had a sore leg, so the prince seated him on a buffalo, while he mounted his horse. After travelling part of the way Iskandar's horse stopped, and trembled. A tiger roared nearby. The prince shouted at it: 'Senseless, uncivilized beast, how dare you lie in wait for me! Why couldn't you choose some-one else!' The prince gave chase, but the tiger escaped. But meanwhile the unfortunate Setia Rimba, left behind seated on his buffalo, suddenly found himself face to face with the tiger, and shouted desperately for help. Iskandar came galloping back on his horse and thrust his spear into the tiger's mouth slaying it.¹⁷

The AN episode is as follows:

One day he had gone forth from Dilhi to hunt in the district of Palam, and there an enormous and terrific serpent, such as might move the heart of the daring, appeared on the line of road. On this occasion his Majesty exhibited the miracle of Moses, and without hesitation which comes even to generous hearts, put forth his white hand and approaching the serpent, courageously and in the strength of a sacred intimation, seized its tail with his holy hand and quelled it. Yusuf Muhammad Khan brother of Mirza 'Aziz Kokaltash beheld this token of power and in his astonishment came and told me.¹⁸

The cultural gulf between the two texts should now be plain. The episodes from the *Akbar Nama* are highly literary, ornate and rococo in style, and encyclopaedic in their allusiveness. Those from the Malay work are characterized by an element of earthiness and a fondness of anecdote for its own sake. In the first set of examples hardly any basis for comparison exists. In the second, the HA gives us a typical Malay story with Sabtu as the cat's paw, taken in by the confidence trickster, and spiced with a dash of ethnic humour – 'hey, dog-eating Batak'. Again there is no basis on which to compare it to that from the *Akbar Nama*.

¹⁷ Iskandar, *Hikajat Atjeh*, p. 157. It may be noted that a confrontation between a buffalo boy seated on his buffalo and a tiger was quite common in various parts of Sumatra until recent times.

¹⁸ Beveridge, *Akbar Nama*, p. 385.

In the third set of alleged counterparts, the HA has given yet another Malay story with the same lightness of touch as the first: and indeed the picture of the hapless Setia Rimba seated on a buffalo looking down into the jaws of a tiger is not without humour.

In short, the episodes are quite different, and if each work is looked at as a whole, there are no structural arguments for considering them parallel.

There are differences of other kinds. For example in the Malay text, no author indicates his presence. Abu'l-Fazl, on the other hand, intrudes himself into his narrative on numerous occasions, expressing his sense of privilege at writing the story, and stressing how completely free he is of sycophancy. These considerations apart however, it requires no more than a glance at the chapter headings of the two substantial volumes of the *Akbar Nama* to realize that it and the *Hikayat Aceh* belong to different cultural traditions and represent very different orders of rhetorical expression.

The unknown author of the *Hikayat Aceh* had a high opinion of his ruler Iskandar, it is true. The articulation of his work is more consciously Islamic than that of the *Malay Annals*, but, despite the seventeen rare Persian words that Bausani claims occur in it, the case made for any relationship between it and a Persian model is not convincing.¹⁹ The techniques and the cultural resources that he manipulates are very different to those used by Abu'l-Fazl.

The anecdotal character of the work in some ways is reminiscent of that of the *Malay Annals*, in which many anecdotes are told simply because they have a particular form, not because they are true. Penth, in the introduction to his German translation of the HA, refers to an episode which tells how two Portuguese, claiming to represent the King of Spain and Portugal, came to Aceh to negotiate for a fort and brought some magnificent horses to present to the Sultan, one of which only the ten-year old Iskandar Muda could ride. These two gentlemen are named Dong Dawis and Dong Rumis respectively. After extensive research, Penth concludes that the names, although prefixed by a phonetic imitation of Dom, (and the Malay author gives rein to his fancy by having the delegation call for a Portuguese-Malay interpreter to explain to the prince the finer points of the horse) can only be Master Davis and Master Tomkins, who as ship's officers accompanied Cornelis de Houtman on the visit to Aceh in 1599, during which he was killed by the Acehnese. It is unlikely that they were at the same time representing the King of Spain and Portugal.²⁰

It is clear that fact and date are not important to the author of the work. Once again form criticism may show something of how the book was compiled. The point of this story too is not its historicity, but the meaning of its form which is of the kind: the horse that no-one else could ride, the bow that only Rama could bend, and so on.

¹⁹ L.F. Brakel cites this statement of Bausani in 'Persian Influence in Malay Literature', *Abr-Nahrain*, 9 (1969-70) pp. 1-16.

²⁰ Quoted from E.C.G. Barrett of Hans Penth (tr.), *Hikajat Atjeh* (Otto Harrassowitz, 1969) in *BSOAS*, 33 (1970) p. 675.

Another feature of these episodes from the Malay work is their 'folksy', almost throw-away, character. They may be related to, or derived from motifs known in other regions of the archipelago. In the *Babad Tanah Jawi*, for example, Joko Tingkir, another man born to be king, fights and kills a wild buffalo, but this is too far removed from our present text to be discussed here.²¹

This 'folksy' character is important, for it suggests a clue as to which world shape has been most influential in the compiling of the work: namely that in it and similar works, such as the *Malay Annals* already referred to and the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* (The Story of the Kings of Pasai),²² an ethnic Malay element in the structure and shaping of the work appears far more important than the Indo-Persian tradition. It is noteworthy, for example, that the *Hikayat Aceh* initiates its story with two folk motifs, tracing Iskandar Muda's ultimate descent from two brothers, one of whom founds his line by marriage with a princess found in a clump of bamboo, the other by marriage with a flying princess, the youngest of seven sisters who descend from heaven to this world to bath in a pool at full moon. Both of these motifs are common in the ancestry of heroes in the Malay *penglipur lara* (soother away of cares) folk stories.²³

The *penglipur lara* story as a genre is far from adequately studied, and although the versions of such stories that have been recorded are obviously not as old as the period we are studying, at least they give some idea both of the contents and expectations of a story that have been current among Malay village communities for many generations. It is self-evident that an account telling of kings and court customs is a kind of story, and that the king, as the stabilizing fulcrum of the realm, is the hero of that story in much the same way of the hero of a folk romance provides the principle of order in the episodes told about him.

The point is not, it should be stressed, that there is direct imitation, but simply that court scribe and peasant, sharing a common perception of the world, shared also a predisposition to tell a story, any story, in a similar way. So a folk hero's ancestry, the auguries that attend his mother's pregnancy, the events occurring at his birth and episodes of his childhood would all be known to a court chronicler and be grist to his mill as he sets about telling the story of the court, the dynasty and the ruler he serves.

Thus the Malim Deman story, in which the motif of marriage with a flying princess occurs (a motif widely known throughout the archipelago), opens with the ancestry of its hero Malim Deman, a prince whose parents are rulers of a

²¹ W.L. Olthoff (ed.), *Babad Tanah Jawi* ('s-Gravenhage, 1941) pp. 40-1.

²² A.H. Hill (ed. & tr.), 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai', *JMBRAS*, 33, ii (1960).

²³ A number of these have been reprinted by O.U.P. (East Asia Branch) Kuala Lumpur, in the series *Sastera Hikayat*.

kingdom based on a river mouth and who ultimately is descended from the seventh heaven to be the Vice-Regent of Allah. Signs of the kingdom's prosperity are that trade prospers, the granaries are full, the fields are full of buffaloes, the rivers are covered with ducks and geese, and the harbours crowded with ships. The palace even to its steps is gold, and the king and queen give audience to their son seated on thrones of gold.

He receives a call in a dream to set out on the road that is to lead to kingship. The task set him is to marry the youngest of seven princesses who descend from heaven to earth to bath every full moon.²⁴

Another story of the same type which has elements in common with the *Hikayat Aceh* is that of *Awang Sulong Merah Muda* (Awang the First Born, the Young Merah).²⁵

The genealogical prologue to this story is more complex than that to *Malim Deman*. It introduces a ruler who has four daughters, the youngest of whom marries a prince without a kingdom who is then invited to be king by a people ruled only by territorial chiefs. For a long time the couple have no children, and only after pilgrimages to holy places and magic rituals does the wife conceive, and Awang, the hero of the story is born.

The importance of genealogy then is common to both the folk story and the *Hikayat Aceh*. The natural disturbances which herald the birth of the hero in each case are similar.

Seven floor boards cracked
Seven roof-beams cracked,
Sunshine and rain blended
Thunderbolts blazed together across the sky
All the musical instruments sounded.²⁶

Thunder rolled
Lightning flashed
The roar was awe-inspiring
The earth shook as in an earthquake
Rain drizzled
A howling wind arose.²⁷

²⁴ R. Roolvink (ed.), *Hikayat Malim Deman* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1972).

²⁵ A.J. Sturrock and R.O. Winstedt (eds.), *Hikayat Awang Sulong Merah Muda* (Malay Literature Series, no. 5) (Singapore, Malaya Publishing House, 1961). *Merah* [red] should probably be *Merah* – a Sumatran title. These elements, it should be stressed, are common to many folk stories.

²⁶ 'Tujuh bilah lantai terpatih/ tujuh mengkawan atap terpatih/ berderu-deru hujan panas/ panah memanah haliintar/ barbunyi sekalian bunyi-bunyian' (*Awang Sulong*, p. 16).

²⁷ 'Haliintarpun membelah/ kilatpun sabung menyabung/ guruhpun terlalu 'azamat/ bumipun bergerak selaku-laku gempa/ hujanpun rintirintir/ anginpun taufan' (*Hikayat Atjeh*, p. 118).

We have already referred to the words of the wily Batak in the *Hikayat Aceh*:

What mountains would you climb
What plains would you cross.²⁸

which are very similar in rhythm and intent to the words of courtiers summoned by royal command in the folk story:

From whence is an enemy coming
What bank is collapsing
What stockade needs defending
Or powder needs drying.²⁹

Like Iskandar, Awang makes marvellous progress in all his studies. First he masters the Qur'an with remarkable speed:

The *Qadi* recited a page
He recited a *juz'* (a thirtieth part of the Qur'an)
The *Qadi* recited one *juz'*
He recited three *juz'*
The *Qadi* recited twenty *juz'*
He recited (the Qur'an) to the end.³⁰

Then he masters grammar and logic with equal swiftness:

The teacher read one page
He read ten pages
The teacher read three pages
He read thirty pages.³¹

He learns fencing and the secrets of invulnerability with the same accomplishment. Before his circumcision he is carried seven times in procession round the palace and thence to the bathing stage for the ceremonial lustration which precedes coronations, royal marriages and similar rites of passage in the court tradition.³²

²⁸ 'Gunung yang mana dinaiki/ padang yang mana hendak dijalani' (*Hikayat Atjeh*, p. 146).

²⁹ 'Dimana musuh akan datang/ mana tebing akan runtohi/ atau kubu akan dijuang/ atau obat akan dijemur' (*Awang Sulong*, p. 4).

³⁰ 'Kadi membaca sehelai/ ia membaca se juz/ kadi membaca se juz/ ia membaca tiga juz/ kadi membaca dua puluh juz/ ia membaca sampai khatam' (*Awang Sulong*, p. 21).

³¹ 'Guru membaca sehelai/ ia membaca sepuluh helai/ guru membaca tiga helai/ ia membaca tiga puluh helai' (*Awang Sulong*, p. 24).

³² *Awang Sulong*, pp. 31-3.

The common elements between the two genres of literary expression cannot be explained by chance. This is not to argue that either structurally or imaginatively a chronicle is simply a special form of folk story — only that the chronicles and the folk stories come from the same cultural matrix, and reflect a common perception of the shape of the world: a world which is in 'steady state' and in which time is cyclic. True, conflicts and trials occur, but there are social and magical mechanisms available which, if unable to destroy evil, may serve to keep it at bay. Certainly it can be maintained that the court chronicles we have discussed have in some respects a different angle of intersection with reality than the folk tales, and include more elements of foreign cultures — odd phrases, tags, titles of books, proverbs — but essentially both belong to the same world; the differences reside simply in the fact that the components are put to a different use.

Of course, a court chronicler would have a chance to get to know a ruler and the personalities and officials of the court and the wider world in a way not possible to a wandering story teller. But besides folk romances, he would be aware both of the maxims of folk wisdom and the farcical tales of Pak Pandir and Pak Kadok.³³

These may not be always appropriate for court works, but they represent a human sense of the ridiculous, and the sense of the ridiculous will out: it is not to be limited to tales of such country bumpkins. In the relatively more sophisticated environment of the court, and in response to foreign stimuli, it undergoes a change of guise in works prepared for a royal master. Perhaps this is why the closest approaches to character and individuality in these works are vignettes of human foibles and eccentricities, which become part of the repertoire of stories to be told, without necessarily being the truth about any individual who lived in history.

In short, the court works purporting to tell of the past so far discussed, have more in common with the Malay folk tradition, and the world-shape perceptible in it, than with either the Perso-Indian tradition or, as we shall see later, the Arabo-Islamic tradition of biography and historiography; they demonstrate that there is a stubborn structure of an ethnic Malay world-shape able to maintain itself against various pressures, even in an unstable cultural situation.

It may well be asked: does this stubborn structure maintain itself in every work in Malay deriving from, or having to do with this period? This is a question related to the problem of defining genres and categories in Malay writing referred to at the beginning of this article.

It is easy to be misled by the ubiquitous appearance of the word *hikayat*: literally it means no more than 'story', but it is applied, apparently indiscriminately, to a wide range of works.

³³ *Hikayat Jenaka*.

They include sets of frame-stories derived direct from foreign sources, court accounts of the past, tales of the heroes and prophets of Islam and versions of the Rama story. Even works transmitted by the oral tradition are referred to by their reciters as *hikayat*.

It is important to stress this variety, for it makes it obvious that the common title *hikayat* does not designate a genre any more than a difference in title designates a work of a different kind.

The *Hikayat Hang Tuah*³⁴, for example is a long, episodic and often boring compilation which includes court, ethnic Malay, Javanese and a wide range of foreign cultural elements; loosely structured around the personality of Hang Tuah, the Malay court hero par excellence. The work is obviously syncretic, and, since there is no evidence that it existed in its present form earlier than the eighteenth century, it cannot, unsupported, offer a sound basis for speculation about the earlier period.

The Rama story exists in two principal forms. There is the *Hikayat Seri Rama*, a manuscript of which reached the Bodleian library from Archbishop Laud's collection in 1633, a text which shows little Malay cultural influence, and there is the Maxwell 'folk' version, also known as the *Hikayat Seri Rama*, in which material from the Rama story has been thoroughly reworked into the form of a Malay *penglipur lara* tale.³⁵

Then there is the *Hikayat Amir Hamzah*, a story about an 'uncle' of the prophet. It appears to derive directly from a Persian source, without having undergone significant Malay cultural influence; at all events it has not experienced the transmogrifications that are revealed in the Javanese cycles of stories about this hero.³⁶ Likewise the *Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyya*, a story of the great Shi'ite hero, corresponds very closely with a Persian original without having undergone significant 'Malayization'.³⁷ The *Hikayat Iskandar dhu'l-Karnayn*, the story of Alexander the Great, has a different character again. Significantly, it appears to derive directly from an Arabic source, but in this case too there is little evidence of Malayization.³⁸

³⁴ Kassim Ahmad (ed.), *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (Kuala Lumpur, 1964). While acknowledging the originality of Shelly Errington's perceptions of the psycho-literary history of the Malays based on this text, the caution is necessary that she has not drawn on any comparative material to support or refine them.

³⁵ W.G. Shellabear (ed.), 'Hikayat Seri Rama', *JSBRAS*, 71 (1915); and W.E. Maxwell (ed.) 'Sri Rama', *JSBRAS*, 55 (1910).

³⁶ Winstedt, 'History', p. 80; and Ph.S. van Ronkel, *Hikayat Amir Hamzah* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1895).

³⁷ L. Brakel (ed.), 'The Hikayat Muhammad Hanafiyyah' in *Bibliotheca Indonesica* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1975) Vol. XII.

³⁸ P.J. van Leeuwen, *De Maleische Alexanderroman* (Meppel, B. ten Brink, 1937).

There remain frame stories, such as the *Hikayat Bakhtiar* and the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman*.³⁹ Of these, perhaps only the *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* is likely to hold the attention of a modern Western reader, for it has the astringency and sophistication of a developed literary tradition. Yet although it was preserved in a court library — and was classified as restricted reading — the absence of any local colour on the one hand, and on the other the mercantile ethic that it reflects so clearly, alert us to the possibility that it was prepared by a non-Malay for non-Malays, as perhaps were some of the other *hikayat*.

This would lend support to the usefulness of the distinction made by R. Roolvink recently⁴⁰ between Malay literature and literature in Malay: a distinction which introduces yet another variable to be taken into account in attempts to classify Malay literature. For such a distinction serves to explain the variety of world-shapes discernible in the various literary products extant in Malay, and to illustrate ways of thinking and ordering experience in competition — for the most part unsuccessfully so — with the shape of the world as it was perceived by that traditional ethnic Malay consciousness which was the ultimate determinant of the character of court chronicles and *penglipur lara* stories alike.

How was this so?

The question is not easily answered, for even the term 'ethnic Malay' needs to be treated with some care: it should be understood not simply in a genetic sense but as indicative of a combination of domicile, life-style, cultural formation and language. 'Malays', however one may understand the term, had crossed the Indian ocean either for religion or trade centuries before the period we are discussing. Yet this tradition of participation in a wide ranging system of maritime trade has left no mark on that literary product of the court culture which might appear at first sight to be a counterpart to the Western genre 'history'.

Nevertheless the Malay city states such as Melaka, Aceh, and Riau were Muslim, and from them as early as the sixteenth and possibly even fifteenth centuries, peoples from the Malay world — ethnic Malays, local residents of mixed descent and settlers — had been making the pilgrimage to the holy cities in Arabia and travelling to centres of learning of Islam in the Middle East, then returning to play a commercial, religious, administrative or political role in their home states.

³⁹ Winstedt, 'History', pp. 103-7; and Winstedt (ed.), *Hikayat Bayan Budiman* (Malay Literature Series, no. 16) (Singapore, Malaya Publishing House, 1960).

⁴⁰ R. Roolvink, *Bahasa Jawi De Taal van Sumatra*, inaugural lecture, Leiden, 1975.

As scholars, they would study a wide range of subjects within the Islamic disciplines, including meticulous analyses of Arabic grammar, metaphysical discussions on the nature of Being, the meaning of time and change, and the use of historical method to order events chronologically and to establish the truth or falsehood of reports of past events, and if true, the precise date on which they occurred.

The Arabo-Islamic sense of history, and the role of history as a discipline among the Islamic Sciences is clearly set out in a work by al-Sakhawi (831-902/1427-97), 'Open Denunciation of the Adverse Critics of the Historians'.⁴¹

'Linguistically' – al-Sakhawi says – '*tarikh* means information regarding time. One says: *arrakhtu*, or *arrakhtu al-kitaba*, that is: I made clear the time (date) of the writing of the book'.⁴²

Later, he sums up the term *tarikh* as signifying 'a branch of learning that is concerned with research regarding the occurrences which take place in time, in the intention of establishing their character and their place in time. In fact, it is concerned with everything that was (and is) in the world'.⁴³

The object of history, accordingly, is man and time. 'The problems with which history is concerned are the circumstances of man and time broken down to details within the general framework of the accidental circumstances that exist for man and in time', and its justification and usefulness 'consists in the knowledge of matters as they actually are'.⁴⁴

As for the benefits to be derived from the study of history, al-Sakhawi remarks:

Great usefulness and much instructiveness are also to be found in the historical information about kings and their politics, about the reasons for the formation of dynasties, their success as well as the reason for dissolution, about the administration of affairs by military men and *wazirs*, and about related circumstances which in a similar fashion recur continually in the world. He who knows this aspect of history is like a man who has lived through all ages, has experienced everything, and has personally tried out all those circumstances. His mind grows. He becomes experienced and free from all ignorance and inexperience.⁴⁵

⁴¹ F. Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1968) 2nd edition, pp. 269-535.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 271.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 273.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 277.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 285.

No wonder then that he concludes this discussion with the aphorism:
'The knowledge of history increases man's intellectual capacity.'⁴⁶

This idea of history is far removed from the products of the Malay court culture we have discussed: and indeed virtually nothing of the Islamic sense of chronology or the criticism of reports finds its way into Malay writing belonging to the court until the time of Raja Ali Haji of Riau with the compilation of the *Tuhfat al-Nafis* in 1867.⁴⁷ Matheson and Andaya point out in their article in this volume that the *Tuhfat al-Nafis* was produced at the time of an Islamic revival, by a ruler with a strong personal interest in the Islamic disciplines: this, clearly, was not a coincidence.

If however we turn from this self-avowed Malay writing to writing *in* Malay by the seventeenth century Gujarati Nur al-Din al-Raniri, we enter a different intellectual world. Al-Raniri won the patronage of Sultan Iskandar II of Aceh in 1637, and during an extended residence in Aceh (he died there in 1657) wrote in Malay a universal history, the *Bustan al-Salatin*, one part of which is devoted to the history of Aceh, overlapping the time span covered by the *Hikayat Aceh*.⁴⁸ It is very different in character to the works we have discussed. The work is based on fact and date. Further, the reader is immediately struck, at least in the narrative passages, by the economy of language. There is a tautness of style and sense of direction in the narrative that is not evident in the other works referred to; further, there is a balance and architectonic character in the sentence structure which suggests that the foreigner was ultra careful in his use of Malay.

Al-Raniri's style of exposition at times shows an Indian rather than a Malay style of baroque. One may take for example the extended metaphor which describes the state of the realm on the accession of Iskandar II, his patron:

Now at that time mankind were like plants enduring fierce heat from the sun. But when the umbrella of his sovereignty was raised, they were able to take shelter beneath it, and to obtain grace from the rain of his beneficence. The joy of the people was like that of flowers when the light rain of dawn falls upon them, and they open and spread their fragrance throughout all the realm. The wind of his prosperity blew, and the full sun of his splendour shone, and the pennant of his sovereignty was raised high, and the flag of his eminence (nobility) was unfurled.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 286.

⁴⁷ Winstedt, 'History', pp. 134-5. See also the article by Matheson and Andaya below.

⁴⁸ Teuku Iskandar (ed.), *Bustanu's-Salatin* Bab II, Fasal 13 (Kuala Lumpur, 1966).

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 44

The reign inaugurated by his successor (and widow) Safiyat al-Din is described in similar, though not identical terms:

Then the umbrella of her nobility was opened, and all mankind were able to shelter beneath it and to obtain the grace of her beneficence. And the joy of her people under her rule was as that of plants and flowers receiving rain in the heat of the day. And the plants bore fruit, and the flowers opened their petals and spread their fragrance throughout the realm. And the wind of her prosperity blew, and the pennant of her sovereignty was raised high, and the flag of her nobility was unfurled.⁵⁰

There is, further, a difference in the way the author perceives the authority of a male and female ruler: the Sultan Iskandar II carries out the judgement (*hukum*) of Allah; and enforces the Law of the prophet. The Sultana Safiyat, for all her confidence and effectiveness as a ruler, does not do this, even though she respects and loves all the *ulama* and descendants of the Apostle who came to Aceh and she loves all her subjects, men and women, as a mother loves her children.⁵¹

A very clearly articulated and consistent Islamic moral ethos runs through the work. For example, when some plotters have been caught, thanks to divine guidance, trying to poison Iskandar II, and their guilt has been established, Iskandar calls the *Qadi*, the first minister and the court and declares: 'Behold those who would be disloyal and those who follow their passions, but I trust in the care of the God who created me'.⁵²

Yet another passage illustrates how Sultan Iskandar II obeys the injunction to Islamic rulers to pardon wrong-doers repeatedly. The incident concerns a group of Portuguese, who are executed only after successive pardons for repeated acts of brigandage.⁵³

The text is functional and not embroidered by gossip-type, folksy stories such as clutter up or add leaven to (according to one's point of view) the *Sejarah Melayu* and *Hikayat Aceh*. If the king hunts, the statement of what he hunts is brief and to the point; if he visits a grave, we are told no more than that he recites *Al Fatiha*, lights candles and burns incense. If a court ceremony is held, the description of the palace decorations is sober and detailed.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59

⁵¹ *Ibid.*

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 46. Note how in the Matheson and Andaya paper, Raja Ali two centuries later attributes evil to the following of the passions (*hawa nafsu*) in the same terms.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 46-7.

If the sovereign discusses an issue with his ministers, the issue is specific, the argument realistic. In one example the king has decided to make a pilgrimage to the shrines of saints in Pasai, and orders the ships and provisions to be prepared. Two of the ministers demur: 'At this time the people will be busily occupied because they are attending to their crops'. The ruler thereupon agrees: 'In that case, we had better set out after the harvest is finished'.⁵⁴ This occurred in AH 1040/1638. The date on which the original proposal was made is not given, but the pilgrimage party sets out on 13 Dhu'l-hijja 1048/Sunday, 17 April 1639.

A similar specificity and realism characterizes the description of an event shortly after the death of Iskandar. An envoy arrives from the Gujarat, and learning that the ruler has died is grieved, because: 'The desire of my ruler cannot be fulfilled'. The Queen is informed of his anxiety, and at once replies: 'we respond to the kindness of the envoy of Gujarat: we will under no circumstances go back on the agreement made by the late king'.⁵⁵ The commitment concerning which the envoy was visiting Aceh is not stated, but the concern that an agreement with one sovereign should be honoured by a successor is as old as diplomacy.

Al-Raniri, in the conventional way, refers to himself regularly as *sahib al-hikayat* (an Arabic expression) or its literal Malay equivalent *yang empunya cerita*, i.e. the owner, teller of the story. On at least two occasions however he refers to himself as *sahib al-tarikh* (Arabic) or, its Malay equivalent, *yang empunya tarikh* – teller of the history, for which he uses the technical term defined and discussed by al-Sakhawi, and justly so, for in his narrative there is nothing inconsistent with *tarikh* as it is used and understood in the Arabo-Islamic tradition.

Does such a sense of time, order and particularity occur in later Malay writing about the past, a concern with fact, date, economic concerns and the real world, without the stubborn structure of the ethnic Malay shape of the world imposing itself on the material?

Examples are few. A notable one however is the text translated by Marsden as *Memoirs of a Malayan Family* and published by him in 1830, the Malay text of which was published by Drewes in 1961.⁵⁶ (It will be observed with what speed Malay studies develop.) The text is an account by 'La-uddin, a pepper trader who acted as an agent for the English and Dutch in the latter part of the seventeenth century. 'La-uddin begins his work:

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁵⁶ W. Marsden (tr.), *Memoirs of a Malayan Family* (New York, 1968); G.W.J. Drewes, *De Biografie van een Minangkabausen Peperhandelaar in de Lampongs* ('s-Gravenhage, 1961).

This narrative, which contains a full detail of events that took place at the period of the Dutch Company's taking measures for establishing a settlement at Samangka is transcribed for the information of the (English) resident of Laye, who has expressed a wish to be made acquainted with the circumstances.⁵⁷

In introducing his translation, Marsden remarks that although the work was not dated, the omission is supplied, with sufficient accuracy, by a mention of the name of the English gentleman at whose request it was written, a man who took up his position in 1788. Marsden adds that although the years in which events took place are not mentioned, the intervals in time between one occurrence and another are carefully noted — events which occurred between 1756-1766.⁵⁸

Marsden's comment on the character of the text is significant:

The memoirs . . . are without any pretension to political or literary importance . . . [they exhibit] a genuine picture, by a native hand, of Malayan manners and dispositions, more forcibly, and it may be said, more dramatically represented, than they could be drawn by the pencil of any stranger. They have also the recommendation of affording a specimen of simple narrative; a style of which some writers have thought the Malays incapable, and which is certainly rare in comparison with the romantic and extravagant tales so prevalent amongst these and other eastern people.⁵⁹

'Simple narrative', of course, is a relative term. Orphans, after the death of a father, are described as being 'like birds who directed their flight to wherever the trees of the forest presented them with edible fruit, and there they alighted. They were like chickens that had lost their tender and careful mother, who used to foster them. When it was their chance to meet with people who were inclined to show them compassion, to those they devoted their services'.⁶⁰

The text is appealing in its directness and realism — a simple presentation of events as they happened without mythologization or special pleading.

⁵⁷ Marsden, *Family*, p. 1.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p. i.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. ii.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 82.

'La-uddin was a rare bird, but not a solitary one. It is important to note that he belonged to a family in the service of the British, that he was not beholden to any native ruler, that he was not tied to the soil. Moreover, he was prompted to write his story at the behest of a British resident. The limitations of his work are perhaps the limits of his education, but clearly he was literate and had a lively intelligence. It is unfortunate that so little is known of his early life.

A much more important figure is that of Abdullah, who in 1848 published a substantial autobiography.⁶¹

In some respects he is in the same line as al-Raniri — a writer not so much of Malay literature, as of literature in Malay. In his use of Malay, his realism and common sense, his baroque, Indian style metaphors, in his Islamic formation and commitment to Islam, he is clearly in the tradition of al-Raniri. And like al-Raniri too, he was of foreign descent, — perhaps one-eighth Malay — belonging to a Mysore Yemeni family which settled in Melaka in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In Winstedt's terms no doubt, another 'polyglot half-caste'. Just as al-Raniri found himself a patron at court, Abdullah found himself a patron in the British, but guaranteed for himself an autobiography in response to British encouragement. But for whom did he write — in Malay? His autobiography and the attitudes he expressed in it would not have made sense to many ethnic Malays. His enthusiastic acceptance of the ideas of liberalism and progress that he saw personified in Raffles could at best have provoked hostility if not incomprehension. In fact he was writing for the British, and the same class of people as himself; contributing to a literature in Malay for — in the first place — non-Malays.

Thus it is true, and for obvious reasons, that his work had little immediate effect upon the Malays. He did however have an indirect influence on Abu Bakar, the Sultan of Johore (1862-95), who studied at the mission school of B.P. Keasberry in the 1840s with Abdullah's youngest son Ibrahim, and who later employed Ibrahim as his court scribe;⁶² and it is possible that his autobiography, the *Hikayat Abdullah* (Story of Abdullah), had an influence on Raja Ali Haji's *Tuhfat al-Nafis*.⁶³ The measure, character and implications of such influences are outside the scope of this chapter.

⁶¹ A.H. Hill (ed. & tr.), *Hikayat Abdullah* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1970).

⁶² Amin Sweeney and Nigel Phillips, *The Voyages of Mohammad Ibrahim Munshi* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1975).

⁶³ This point is discussed by Virginia Matheson in 'The Tuhfat al-Nafis (The Precious Gift), A Nineteenth Century Malay History Critically Examined' (Ph.D. thesis, Monash, 1973).

Conclusions

There is no reality other than the present which changes as we grasp it, remarks a character in a play of Christopher Fry. The shapes taken by the past are even more mercurial in the eyes of its beholders. To determine these shapes within our own tradition is difficult enough; in an alien tradition their contours remain bafflingly imprecise. Nevertheless, some generalizations can be made.

The Islamic tradition is essentially realistic. No less than Christianity, its development derives from the life and teachings of a particular person at a particular time. Each tradition has a comparable teleology. The world had a beginning and is moving to an end. Thus for each there is a given framework in which events in time can be arranged. Yet for a variety of reasons, developments occurred in Western historiography which did not have a parallel in that of the Islamic world, developments which separate modern Western historiography from traditional Islamic historiography almost as much as this is distinct from the myth-centred world of the old Malay courts.

These old Malay courts — Melaka, and more important Aceh — yield a kind of pseudo-historiography: works that, to justify and maintain a dynasty, appear to give information that is historical in character. Yet, although tinged with the dye of literary cultures deriving from the Indo-Persian civilization that reached its apogee in the Mughal Empire, these works are dominated by the archetypal pattern and attitudes to time discernible in the Malay folk tradition. The only exception is the historical writing of Aceh by the Malay domiciled Gujarati al-Raniri which exemplifies the realism, order and concern for chronology characteristic of Islamic historiography.

The Malay chronicles are loosely organized and cannot stand the same kind of structuralist interpretation that Berg has imposed on the *Babad Tanah Jawi* with an iron determinism, but both have a single reference point and mythic organizing principle, the *daulat* (divine aura) of the ruler, and a sacral notion of the character of the state.

The Islamic perspective is of a quite different character. It is not limited to a single state as its central point of reference. The universalism of Islam ensures this, and the role of history in the service of Islamic Law, in the classifying of tradition, in establishing lines of transmission from teacher to pupil, ensured a meticulous attention to time and place. But this activity always took place within an Islamic context, which at its best included an adamant respect for fact and date, but at its worst could reduce history to a branch of religious instruction. Yet in either case the perspective is limited, and there are no alternative points of reference. In this sense then, the orientation of the historian is only hesitantly secular.

This was largely the situation in Europe until the seventeenth century. Then various factors began to have a cumulative effect. In the first place there was the attitude to character and individuality, already articulated from the time of the Renaissance, with its roots in Hellenic culture, yet owing much to Lockean and Cartesian influences, that was qualitatively different from that current in the principal Asian civilizations of that time; further, there was a break-up of a set of common ideological points of reference in European culture — in part resulting from the convulsions of the Reformation, in part to the discovery of the New World and of Asia. All these factors combined to stimulate the development of a whole complex of new historiographic views and approaches, not simply in relation to the facts of the past, but concerning the processes that these facts signify and the interpretations they can bear. This had the corollary that the writing of history was no longer restricted to a single perspective or world-shape, and that the consequent variety of choice, and an awareness of this variety, made possible a sense of detachment and a suspension of belief in or commitment to any single over-riding sacral ideal. The historian then is free to find a system or no system in what he can learn of the past, to find or not to find God in the unfolding panorama and tragedy of human existence.

Such developments had no counterpart in many of the regions of Asia during the period of Western dominance: in fact in our region the attitudes to the past and to scholarship of the Islamic tradition, and those of the ethnic Malay court tradition, continued their separate ways until the late nineteenth century, when a measure of symbiosis between the two occurred, notably in the *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, perhaps due to the catalyst of a British presence in the region.

This was because European dominance weakened even where it did not altogether suppress the mechanisms for adaptation and change in the areas over which it held sway and, by the very character of its rule, created a situation in which the dynamics and concepts of its own development were to reach our area only through the medium of Western education, which was sporadic in its distribution and affected only a tiny minority of the inhabitants.

The world-shape that this education system brought was as alien to the traditional cultures of Asia, as that European sense of individualism that had created it; it follows that the two bases of Western *literae humaniores*, history and literature, which had developed together with that world-shape, were equally alien, and in fact belonged to a different mode of existence.

Modern history has two faces: the humanistic and the technical. The techniques of the historian's craft are relatively easy to learn. However, the spirit informing them: the passion for a critical summation of the events, values

and great figures of the past; the search for causes, continuities; and an almost obsessive compulsion to analyse its modalities and to arrange the results in a system of carefully structured perspectives, is a volatile mixture more difficult to transfer to another culture.

The introduction of such an enriched yet essentially secular historiography into the educational systems of communities in which even the rational and pragmatic Muslim view of history has scarcely established itself, is one aspect of the difficulties inherent in the teaching of history and the development of historical studies in Indonesia and Malaysia.

Then there are the difficulties inherent in the very nature of the region. It lacks points of reference that have endured long enough to accumulate the kind and volume of materials that are essential for history as it is known in the West. It also lacks a common literary tradition which is further compounded by the fragmented character of much local documentation of the past, and the predominantly sacral character of literary genres that appear to give information about it.

Taken together, these difficulties place immense burdens on any locally born aspirant historian of the region. His formation predisposes him to look at the world and, in particular, his own past, in a particular way. There is a pressure for archetypal motifs to determine the structure of his work, for the character types with which he is familiar to impose themselves on the personalities whose lives he needs to recreate, for events to be organized in particular complexes; above all he faces the difficulty in selecting a 'core' for any historical study appropriate to the materials available to study it, in relation to which a valid 'privileged position' can be maintained, and from which disparate events in the past can be set into order.

It does not follow that, because certain 'cores' can be sustained in the study of European history, they can be sustained in the Malay world. Bastin, for example, has pointed out incisively the absence of a personality base in Malay writing about the past,⁶⁴ rendering the use of such a 'core', so fruitful in the writing of European history, largely impractical in our region.

It is the difficulty in finding 'cores' to exploit, and in deciding what is, and what is not viable, that places the aspirant historian between the millstones of European-style historiography and the stubborn structure of his past. Out of this pressure it may simply happen that a myth is generated and orchestrated, redolent with anachronisms, and unstable generalizations, as the past is observed through a confused perception of the modalities of the present. The result in many cases is a neo-traditional pastiche, exemplified in the incongruities and

⁶⁴ J. Bastin, 'Problems of Personality in the Reinterpretation of Modern Malayan History' in J. Bastin and R. Roelvink (eds.), *Malayan and Indonesian Studies* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964) pp. 141-153.

absurdities of the writings of Muhammad Yamin, Mangaradja Parlindungan or Slamet Muljono.⁶⁵ Yet perhaps these same pressures will create a new historiography appropriate to the region and the evidences that its past can supply, out of which history can be written in a way that can fittingly serve as the corner-stone of a genuine *literae humaniores* in Malay, and all that this means. But will it?

The pre-Islamic poet Zuhayr ibn Abi Sulma once exclaimed:

I know what today holds
As before it yesterday,
But to what tomorrow may bring —
I am blind!

For a historian, the moral is clear!

⁶⁵ For example, Muhammad Yamin, *6000 Tahun Sang Merah Putih* (Jakarta, n.p., 1951); Mangaradja Onggang Parlindungan, *Tuanku Rao* ([Jakarta,] Penerbit Tandjung Pengharapan, 1962); and Slamet Muljono, *Runtuhnya Keradjaan Hindu Djawa dan Timbulnja Negara Islam di Nusantara* (Jakarta, Bhratara, 1968).

THE MORAL AUTHORITY OF THE PAST

Court writings about the past often appeared at times of stress or challenge. A kingdom's authority threatened, an imminent succession crisis, the founding of a new dynasty, the decay of contemporary society in the face of intrusive outside forces — these were the kinds of circumstances that drove men to reflect on the past.

For court historians the explanation of these crises was bound up with the conduct of kings, which could fundamentally affect the course of history. The God-given powers of the ruler carried with them specific responsibilities. He should not only provide a model of correct behaviour, but actively promote it in his subjects. Only then could there be peace and prosperity. Vigilance, however, must be constant. The dark age, forever threatening, could descend again if royal virtue failed or religion was neglected. The value of recording the past was therefore to provide examples of good and bad kings, to demonstrate the effect of their conduct on the welfare of their subjects. History, by relating ethical and religious instruction to actual events, became a teaching aid for all mankind, but especially for kings, who could themselves alter its course.

HISTORIANS AND EMPERORS IN VIETNAM AND CHINA:

Comments arising out of Le Van Huu's History,
Presented to the Tran court in 1272*

O.W. Wolters

I shall discuss two perceptions of the past. The first is, as far as one who is not a sinologue can discern it, that of Chinese literati who wrote histories. Their perspective was conveyed by their books to Vietnamese literati, including Le Van Huu, an examination graduate of 1247 and, at one stage in his career, an official in the Han Lam academy. The other perception is Le Van Huu's. The Vietnamese annals (*Dai Viet Su Ky Toan Thu*) state that he was commissioned to edit the historical records of Vietnam and was congratulated when he submitted his completed *Dai Viet Su Ky* to the Tran throne early in 1272. He had been ordered to cover the period from Trieu Da's reign to the end of the Ly dynasty, a span of time extending from the end of the third century BC to the early thirteenth, when the Tran dynasty succeeded the Ly.

The Chinese and Vietnamese perceptions of the past that will be my point of departure concern a theme of significance to Vietnamese in medieval times: the meaning of the Sino-Vietnamese tributary relationship. Huu, as we shall see, incorporated information from Chinese historical records concerning the conventions of the relationship, and the possibility arises that he was influenced by Chinese historiographical models and intentions. The Tran rulers of the thirteenth century were devoutly Buddhist, subscribing to the *Dhyana* school of the Mahayana, but they also employed a bureaucracy and appointed literati to subordinate posts. To this extent, the court may have been more susceptible, though not necessarily always hospitable, to sinic influences than any other sector in Vietnamese society at the time.

Before I compare the form, treatment and purpose of Le Van Huu's history with corresponding features in a Chinese history, I shall summarize the disturbing contemporary background in Vietnam that gave special significance to the subject of Vietnam's relations with China. In the years immediately after the first unsuccessful Mongol invasion of 1257 Kublai Khan increasingly suspected his Vietnamese 'vassal's' fidelity, and he exerted immoderate diplomatic pressure in order to supervise the Tran court. He frequently sent envoys to Vietnam and even posted his own representative to the capital of Thang-long. Towards the end of 1270 Kublai despatched an angry message which denounced the Tran court's haughty protocol when it received Mongol

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edicts and entertained Kublai's envoys. He had recently realized that, during the past decade, the Tran ruler persisted in according Mongol envoys the courtesies appropriate in an independent ruler's court. In 1271 the Tran ruler replied to the edict. His memorial was humbly phrased and suppressed references to his pretensions, though the imperial status of the Vietnamese rulers, asserted within their own territories, is at least as old as 1057, when bricks excavated in modern times are dated according to the reign period of 'the third emperor of the Ly family'. But the Tran ruler insisted in his reply to Kublai that his court protocol was in accordance with his country's ancient customs.

Such was the disturbing background when Le Van Huu was ordered to compile the Vietnamese annals, and the question is whether he wrote an ingenious history that should be regarded as a Chinese modelled counter-history, with the same range of topics and treatment that one finds in a Chinese history but adapted to sustain a Vietnamese interpretation of the tributary relationship. After all, he was constructing a history of dynasties as Ssu-ma Kuang did; the *Tzu-chih t'ung-chien* covers a roughly comparable span of time. Moreover, Huu's research among Chinese sources for information about the tributary relationship implies that he was familiar with the organization, purposes, and outlook of Chinese historians.

I shall first define briefly some essential features of the Chinese perception and presentation of the past. Because Huu is interested in the Sino-Vietnamese past as seen through Vietnamese eyes, I shall also note how the Vietnamese past was seen through Chinese eyes.

Chinese history, written by scholars of the 'Confucian persuasion', was seen as a record, generation by generation, of mankind's performance in living up to the moral standards taught by the sage rulers of high antiquity. Chinese historians contemplated a golden age of the sage rulers, whose moral principles supplied canons for interpreting the behaviour of subsequent generations of rulers and subjects. The inevitable consequence was that the historians, usually officials, paid special attention to the role of government as the agency for protecting morality. The Chinese were convinced that Heaven had ordained the rule of a given dynastic line in recognition of its superior *virtus (te)* and for the purpose of achieving harmony among human beings. The dynasty, supported by its Mandate, was seen as being in the orthodox line of succession (*cheng-t'ung*) from the sage emperors, who did not found dynasties, and the three dynasties of Hsia, Shang, and Chou that succeeded to the Mandate. The dynastic line of succession was the mechanism whereby primeval wisdom was, despite setbacks, transmitted to the living generation. The Han and subsequent dynasties could be seen, with more or less verisimilitude, as the successors of the Chou.

Obviously a special emphasis was given to the phenomenon of the orthodox line of succession as a consequence of the historian's need to justify his own dynasty's right to be recognized as the recipient of Heaven's Mandate after the preceding dynasty had forfeited it. Obviously, too, the compiling and

reviewing of the record of the past were opportunities for commending admirable examples of persons outside the imperial families who chose to lead moral lives or for criticizing those who did otherwise. The performance of dynasties and officials became valuable teaching aids for instructing the present generation. Ssu-ma Kuang, preparing to write his great history, informed the Sung emperor, Ying-tsung, that he had wanted to write a chronological history that embodied:

all that a prince ought to know – everything pertaining to the rise and fall of dynasties and the good and ill fortune of the common people, all good and bad examples that can furnish models and warnings.¹

He was writing at a time when the emperors were beginning to hold seminars, attended by readers-in-waiting, to lecture on the classics or to read history. In this way, current policy questions could be discussed in the light of relevant historical analogies.² Here, too, was an opportunity for historians to influence the present generation of rulers and officials by displaying their sophistication and their by no means unobjective attitude towards the past.

The same perception of the past, with its emphasis on moral excellence and cultural continuity, shaped Chinese perceptions of the Sino-Vietnamese relationship. Chinese scholars were able to read in the *Shih-chi* that *Chiao-chih*, the Western Han name for Vietnam and perhaps the corruption of an indigenous name,³ lay within the sphere of influence of Kao-yang, the fifth of the great sage emperors of antiquity.⁴ But only in China did dynasties inherit the Mandate of Heaven.

The Chinese imperial heirs of the sages were seen as being able to attract automatic obedience from vassals in distant lands, and ancient Chinese literature was believed to supply them with an example that, over the centuries, could be cited as an allusion to the way in which Vietnam in early times had been attracted by Chinese civilization. The *Hou Han-shu* mentions what came to be

¹ E.G. Pulleyblank, 'Chinese Historical Criticism: Liu Chih-chi and Ssu-ma Kuang' in W.G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan* (London, O.U.P., 1961) pp. 153-4.

² R.M. Hartwell, 'Historical Analogism, Public Policy, and Social Science in Eleventh- and Twelfth Century China', *The American Historical Review*, 76, iii (1971) p. 701.

³ Nguyen Phuc Long, 'Les nouvelles recherches archeologiques au Vietnam (Complement au Vietnam de Louis Bezacier)', *Arts asiatiques*, numero special, 31 (1975) p. 14. The suggestion is that *Chiao-chih* originally meant 'the territories occupied by the peoples who worshipped the *Kiao long* (the crocodile-dragon totem)'.

⁴ E. Chavannes, *Les Memoires Historiques de Se-ma Ts'ien* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1967) Vol. I, p. 37. The year of this legendary emperor's accession corresponds to 2435 BC.

regarded as the first tributary mission from Vietnam, sent in early Chou times. The mission was sent from *Viet-thuong*. The envoys said that they had come a great distance because they knew that China had a sage.⁵ This event became the symbol of an ancient gesture of homage to China and, in later times, part of the cultural justification for Vietnam's political submission. From early T'ang times a body of classicist opinion in the Chinese court was able to recall the benign influence of the sage emperors and kings as an argument for adopting pacific policies towards Vietnam, and they could justify their case on military grounds by quoting the *Viet-thuong* envoys' account of the distance that separated the two countries.⁶

Trieu Da (207-137 BC) who, as we shall see, was an important figure in Le Van Huu's conception of Vietnamese history, was a contemporary of the early Han emperors and had seized a satrapy for himself in southern China, where he ruled from Canton and exercised minimal influence in Vietnam. The Han records show that he had acknowledged the sage-like Han emperors as his suzerains, and he was always remembered in China as an obedient vassal. Si Nhip provided the Chinese with a different kind of exemplary figure in the Sino-Vietnamese past. He was the Eastern Han's representative in Vietnam during the last decades of Han rule at the end of the second century AD and the beginning of the third. Though of Vietnamese origin, he had been educated in China and attempted to rule Vietnam as a Chinese-style official.

So much, then, by way of a summary of the Chinese perception of the past. Vietnamese history, subsumed by Chinese dynastic chronology, becomes an opportunity for moralistic observations by Chinese emperors and scholar-officials and lends itself as a foil for the historians' didactic purpose in their effort to teach the principles and consequences of good government. Vietnamese history is no more than a pale reflection of the sequel to the cultural glow at the dawn of Chinese history, a glow that is fanned from time to time when good emperors are ruling in China. The tributary relationship is regarded as the Vietnamese vassals' privileged occasion for communicating with the Chinese emperors, always the source of cultural excellence.

We can now return to Le Van Huu and inquire to what extent he seems to adapt Vietnamese history to a similarly organized view of the past in order to write a counter-history based on a Chinese-modelled dynastic form. He uses dynastic history in Vietnam as the skein for his narrative and, as we shall see, he is by no means hesitant in assigning praise and blame in his comments. Yet there are several odd features in his treatment of the past.

⁵ *Hou Han-shu* (Po-na edition), ch.116, 7b-8a.

⁶ The argument was also used by the Tran court to justify the ruler's refusal to visit China to receive investiture.

He does not specifically mention the Chinese primeval golden age — when the sages were ruling — though his comments show that he is familiar with the sages. Instead, he begins his history with Trieu Da's reign in the third and second centuries BC. Trieu Da was a Chinese adventurer from Chen-ting in Hopei. According to the *Shih-chi* and the *Ch'ien Han-shu*, he assumed and retained the title and style of the Han emperors, even though he also accepted Han suzerainty on two occasions.⁷ The Chinese admission finds its way into the Vietnamese annals under the date of 144 BC and enables Huu, who was certainly responsible for introducing the Chinese texts about Trieu Da into the annals, to write a eulogizing comment on him. Trieu Da's *virtus* is compared with that of Shun and Wen Wang, ancient sage rulers. He is described as the successful diplomat who preserved as well as founded the Vietnamese imperial institution.

He inaugurated the imperial institution in our country. His achievement may be judged to be great. If the later emperors could have emulated Trieu Vu in sealing off the frontier, establishing the country's army, following the correct way in their relations with neighbouring countries, and safeguarding their throne with benevolence, they would have preserved the country for a long time, and the Northerners would not again have been able to gaze on us with covetous eyes.⁸

Vietnam's golden age is depicted not in terms of cultural excellence but of imperial independence, when the court's style was exactly the same as that of the Han court. Here is a reconstruction of a golden age that seems to caricature the Chinese view of the most ancient past. Even more odd is Huu's treatment of the centuries from the tenth to the early thirteenth, when Vietnam recovered and maintained its independence. While China's past, seen by its historians, is the record of the transmission of a cultural heritage, Vietnam's past is always the record of a very imperfect matching of Trieu Da's achievement. Nothing in Vietnamese history is equivalent to the waxing and waning of moral excellence that enabled the Chinese to organize their perception of the past and chronicle the succession to the Mandate of Heaven. On the contrary, Vietnamese history, seen in Huu's comments, by no means illustrates the more or less continuous expression of imperial status and *virtus* after independence had been recovered in the tenth century.

⁷ *Shih-chi* (Po-na edition), ch.113, 3b; *Ch'ien Han-shu* (Po-na edition), ch.95, 12a.

⁸ *TT* under date of 137 BC. I have translated in the past tense because I believe that Huu had in mind the opening of the frontier by the last ruler of Trieu Da's dynasty, whom he criticizes in his comment under the date of 111 BC. Trieu Da had sealed the frontier. Trieu Da styled himself Vu-de (the martial emperor).

Surprisingly, Huu refuses to acknowledge Ngo Quyen as being in the line of succession from Trieu Da, and the reason is simply that Ngo Quyen did not proclaim himself as 'emperor'. Huu's denial of status is in spite of this ruler's defeat of the Chinese in 938, which Huu acknowledges in handsome terms. Dinh Tien Hoang in 968 became Trieu Da's first successor because he styled himself 'emperor' and introduced a system of court officials. Huu hails this event:

Was it not, indeed, Heaven's will that our country should again produce the sages' wisdom so that Trieu vuong should have a successor?⁹

Thereafter, Vietnam had heroic diplomat-rulers who could manipulate the tributary relationship in order to maintain their imperial status in Vietnam, and no ruler was more successful than Le Hoan (980-1005). Huu, always concerned to show that the tributary relationship was compatible with Vietnamese independence, again quotes from Chinese texts to verify his contention. He incorporates, with appropriate modifications, passages that reveal that Le Hoan behaved as an independent monarch in the presence of Sung envoys.¹⁰ He also quotes a Chinese text that states that Le Hoan insisted that there was no reason for the Sung court to send missions to Vietnam.¹¹ Here was historical evidence that showed that the Sung emperors, unlike Kublai Khan, connived at the Vietnamese construction of the tributary system.

But, according to Huu, the Vietnamese emperors were wanting in other essential respects. They were unable to make proper arrangements for transmitting the throne to their descendants.¹² Again, their court style, unlike Trieu Da's, did not satisfactorily exemplify the proposition, so dear to Huu, that in its symbolic and ritual features the Vietnamese court was the peer of the Chinese imperial court. This proposition was of central importance in Huu's rendering of Vietnamese independence.

⁹ *TT* under date of 986. Huu's reference to 'the sages' wisdom' and to the 'succession' persuade me that he has Trieu Da and not Trieu Viet-vuong in mind. The latter led the resistance against the Chinese in the sixth century but did not interest Huu. 'Vuong' (king) is the prestigious title attributed to the rulers of the Three Dynasties (Hsia, Shang, and Chou).

¹⁰ According to *TT* under date of 990, Le Hoan pretended to be wounded to avoid having to dismount from his horse and pay respect to the Sung envoys. His pretext is mentioned in Li T'ao, *Hsu tzu-chih t'ung-chien ch'ang-pien* (Chung-kuo hsueh-shu ming-chu series) (Taipei, n.p., 1961) ch. 31, 1. The two accounts of the episode are identical except that the *TT* admits that Le Hoan was being deceitful.

¹¹ *TT* under date of 986. His request is in Li T'ao, ch. 27, 20. According to *TT* under date of 990, Le Hoan obtained the Sung emperor's agreement that diplomatic correspondence should be exchanged on the border. Li T'ao is silent on this matter.

¹² I have discussed Huu's views on dynastic succession in 'Le Van Huu's treatment of Ly Than Ton's reign' in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters (eds.), *Southeast Asian History and Historiography: Essays Presented to D.G.E. Hall* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1976) pp. 203-26.

Also surprising in the work of a scholar who was familiar with Chinese historical writing is Huu's attitude towards the founders of the Ly dynasty, the first long lived one in Vietnam, which is critical. Founders of new dynasties are tenderly treated in Chinese histories. According to Huu, however, only in one respect do they supply exemplary figures. These are the second and third Ly rulers, and the reason is that they avenged earlier Cham attacks across the southern borders.

Huu's criticisms are inspired to a large extent by the Buddhist values and behaviour of the Ly court, and his prejudice may lead us to suppose that he is deploring the absence of Confucian influence in the seat of government. The implication would be that he associates himself with the ideology and perspectives of Chinese historians.

I believe that this is a mistaken interpretation of his concern. The term he uses for non-Buddhist scholars is *nho* 儒. When used in Chinese contexts before the late twelfth century, the term should not be translated as 'Confucianist' in the sense that such a person was sincerely committed to advocating Confucian principles in framing governmental policies, 'Classicist' is a better translation,¹³ and the Ly period context in which the *nho* appear is consistent with this rendering of the term. The *nho* were merely expected to have read and to be familiar with the contents of Chinese classical literature, known to Huu as the 'learning of antiquity'.¹⁴ Huu is interested in the 'learning of antiquity' rather than in the *nho*, and his interest had nothing to do with moralistic doctrines. The *nho*, with their special expertise, could and should have cited this learning to help the court fulfil more effectively its essential role of safeguarding the country's independence. Moreover, and equally important, they could and should have advised the rulers on matters of court style that would have enabled the court to match the style of the Chinese court. If these two spheres of appropriate *nho* influence are borne in mind, we need not be misled by Huu's strictures on Buddhism.

Space permits only two examples of occasions when Huu criticizes the *nho* for their failure to strengthen the court with their learning. The absence of their advice explains why in 1043 the second Ly ruler showed undue mercy towards the rebel Nung ruler in the northern mountains. According to Huu, the emperor practised the 'lesser benevolence' 小仁 of Buddhism and forgot his 'major duty' 大義 to the state.¹⁵ 'Benevolence' and 'duty' are concepts

¹³ I am following Hartwell, p. 690 note 4.

¹⁴ See *TT* under date of 970, where Huu refers to the 'learning of antiquity'. His comments under the dates of 1028 and 1039 refer to the lack of 'learning' of the ruler and the *nho*. His comments under dates of 1034 and 1130 quote Confucius and the *Book of Songs* respectively. His comment on 1129 deplors the ignorance of 'rites', an element in the old learning.

¹⁵ *TT* under date of 1043. Also see comment under date of 1154 for another reference to 'duty'.

that *nho* should have understood. But, because they were ignorant or obsequious, they did not supply this kind of muscle to the dynasty. The other example of Huu's criticism of the *nho* is in the context of his criticisms of the insufficiently imperial style of the Ly court. His comment under the year 1009 compares unfavourably the titles conferred by the first Ly ruler on his parents with those conferred by the founders of the Chou and also, it should be noted, of the contemporary Sung.¹⁶ He has already likened Trieu Da's *virtus* to that of Shun and Wen Wang, and he is not being inconsistent when he invokes other Chinese precedents to emphasize the identical status of the Vietnamese and Chinese courts during Trieu Da's rule, which was later diminished by Ly court practices.

Le Van Huu's notion of the 'learning of antiquity' is very different from that of Ou-yang Hsiu (1007-1072), compiler of the *Hsin T'ang-shu* and another critic of Buddhism. Ou-yang Hsiu was worried by the failure of Confucianism to make headway among the Buddhist masses, for the reason that the whole social and cultural environment was indisposed to Confucianism.¹⁷ But Huu is not interested in transforming the population by Confucian teachings. He soft-pedals the Chinese view, and also the view of later Vietnamese historians, that Si Nhiep, the Eastern Han governor of Vietnam, should be admired as a good cultural influence. His comments never suggest that Vietnam had a tradition of good government that depended on secular doctrines to which rulers and subjects should subscribe. Government is good only when the ruler can rally the country behind him in times of external danger and can strengthen the dynastic succession procedures. A few rulers had achieved the former objective, but no ruler satisfactorily achieved the latter.

Le Van Huu's treatment of Vietnamese history is hardly the kind of treatment one would expect of a Chinese historian of Chinese dynasties. Nevertheless, his craftsmanship and didactic bias may give the impression that he was adapting a history after the Chinese model in order to present a Vietnamese counter-history on the theme of independence and the means of preserving it. He begins with a golden age, dominated by the first emperor, Trieu Da. He issues warnings on how the empire, the exemplary institution of the golden age, should have been protected by later generations of rulers. The orthodox succession (*chinh thong*) is resumed in the tenth century and maintained thereafter, even though the succession is always threatened by succession disputes. Huu's history does not reflect a Confucian-style tension between good and bad moral influences, but the tension between Chinese and Vietnamese renderings of the tributary relationship gives interpretative significance to his work. And even if he seems to find bad rather than good lessons from the

¹⁶ *TT* under date of 1009.

¹⁷ W.T. de Bary, 'Some Common Tendencies in Neo-Confucianism' in D.S. Nivison and A.F. Wright (eds.), *Confucianism in Action* (Stanford, Stanford U.P., 1959) p. 34.

past, he remains a teacher of the lessons of history to whom such terms as *virtus*, duty, and benevolence are familiar. He attacks Buddhism, though on the grounds that it weakens the court and wastes the country's revenue and manpower.¹⁸ Are we, then, dealing with a Chinese-structured perception of the past that came naturally to him when he disclosed his own perception of the Vietnamese past or are we in the presence of an altogether different conception of history?

In spite of apparent similarities between a Chinese history and Huu's history, I have come to the conclusion that Huu did not share the outlook of a Chinese historian, and doubt begins to arise when we consider some implications of the most curious episode in his view of the past, which is the foundation of the empire by Trieu Da. Huu had searched Chinese texts and was well aware that Trieu Da was only a Chinese adventurer; indeed, his treatment of the adventurer was regarded as extravagant by the historian Ngo Thi Si in the eighteenth century.¹⁹ Perhaps Huu was aware of an ancient Vietnamese folk tradition that accepted Trieu Da as a patriot, whose surname was adopted by heroes in later wars of resistance against the Chinese.²⁰ On the other hand, Trieu Da is conspicuously absent among the tutelary spirits honoured by the Tran rulers and described in the *Viet Dien U Linh Tap*, the collection of folk legends compiled in the early fourteenth century. Moreover, there is no evidence that Huu was interested in the Vietnamese background to Trieu Da's intervention in Vietnam; Trieu Da had overthrown An-duong of Co-loa, who had overthrown the last Hung king. On the contrary, Huu's comment on Trieu Da, the first of his comments, reads as though he was deliberately giving effect to the Tran court's order that his work should begin with Trieu Da in order to prove that the Vietnamese empire was founded by this ruler. Trieu Da does not lead him backwards into folklore but enables him to interpret the sequel of Vietnamese imperial history.²¹

Trieu Da's function is to introduce the 'imperial' history of independent Vietnam. He is the diplomat who manipulated the tributary relationship so that he could preside over a Chinese-style court that was the Chinese court's equal and therefore independent. None of his successors down the centuries had discharged all these responsibilities to Huu's satisfaction. But the Tran court, which ordered Huu to introduce his history with Trieu Da, was putting up a

¹⁸ TT under date of 1010.

¹⁹ Ngo Thi Si, *Viet Su Tieu An* (Saigon, Van-hoa A-chau, 1960) pp. 33-6. Ngo Thi Si cut Trieu Da down to size by criticizing him for introducing the period of Chinese domination and for contributing nothing to the cultural well-being of Vietnam.

²⁰ Dr Keith Taylor has discussed Trieu Da's position in 'the historical self-image of the Vietnamese people'. See K. Taylor, 'The Rise of Dai Viet and the Establishment of Thang-long' in K.R. Hall and J.K. Whitmore (eds.), *Explorations in Early Southeast Asian History: the Origins of Southeast Asian Statecraft* (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies, 1976) pp. 161-3.

²¹ Trieu Da's status as the inaugurator of Vietnamese imperial history is explicit or implied in Huu's comments of 137 BC, AD 42, 184, 210 and 968.

brave diplomatic front against Kublai Khan's assault on the conventions of the tributary relationship as they had evolved in Sung times and had allowed the Vietnamese ruler to sustain the title of 'emperor'. Huu may have been using Trieu Da as a peg on which to hang his conception of the ideal Vietnamese emperor, an ideal that became a reality only in the person of Tran Thai-ton (1225-1277), the reigning emperor. The possibility becomes more likely when we note what Huu would have known during his lifetime and especially the dominating influence of Thai-ton, the patron of Huu's history.

Huu would have seen two exciting phenomena. The court was increasingly acknowledging the usefulness of the *nho* and was recognizing as never before that the 'learning of antiquity' could contribute to the well-being of the state. Secondly, the empire was showing the promise of being able to survive in the face of unprecedented danger, and, as we shall see, the court's imperial style was, because of its debt to the 'learning of antiquity', even helping to supply the empire with its maximum strength.

The 'learning of antiquity', in the form of the Four Books and the Six Classics, was being expounded by *nho* under court auspices since 1253. Examinations for public service were being regularly held. Court style was improving. The ruler was being addressed by a term (*quan gia*) that carried Chinese classical allusions and was superior to the different terms used in Ly times, to which Huu objects.²² In 1237, when Tran Thai-ton re-married, his previous wife was reduced to the rank of princess; no longer did the ruler possess two or more consorts of the same rank, another un-Chinese Ly practice that Huu deplores. In 1267, according to the Vietnamese annals, *nho* graduates were being appointed to the administrative bureaux and a beginning was made in displacing illiterate eunuchs in positions of power. Finally, and much more exhilarating for Huu, *nho* were actively helping the court by travelling on dangerous missions to face Kublai Khan with memorials written to defend Vietnamese court protocol or explain why Kublai's orders had been disobeyed. Other *nho* were defending independence by drafting replies to Mongol edicts in the Han Lam or Tap Hien Offices, where the Chinese texts that Huu so skilfully exploited were stacked.

But Huu was also writing at a time when the 'learning of antiquity' was making a much more notable contribution to the country's strength.

Before we examine this development, we must remember that, during the dangerous years in the middle of the thirteenth century, Vietnam's security in the final analysis depended on the Tran family's nerve and unity. But all had not been well in the family. In 1237 Thai-ton had married his brother's wife.

²² *TT* under date of 1369 shows that the Tran rulers were addressed as *quan gia*. In 1277 the ruler congratulated a prince for explaining the classical origin of the term. Is the *TT*'s reference to *quoc gia* (under date of 1250) an error for *quan gia*?

His brother rebelled and would have been executed if Thai-ton had not intervened. The brother remained aggrieved, and his son tried to escape to Sung China not long before the first Mongol invasion in 1257. In these unhappy times the behaviour of the Tran princes was of decisive importance, and the greatest test of their unity was likely to arise when Thai-ton died and a princely struggle for the throne might erupt, as happened in 1028 when the founder of the Ly dynasty died. The struggle could then become Kublai Khan's opportunity for intervening on behalf of a disloyal prince. Indeed, two Tran princes were to defect to the Mongols during the second invasion in the 1280s and one of them allowed himself to be made puppet emperor.

Bearing in mind this threat to Vietnam's security, we shall now consider a remarkable event that took place in 1258 not long after the withdrawal of the Mongol army. Early that year Thai-ton appointed his son Hoang as 'emperor' and withdrew to the Northern Palace. This was the first occasion that the question of the succession had arisen since the Tran dynasty was founded in 1225. Reign periods and edicts were now announced in the name of the new emperor, known after he died as Thanh-ton. Thai-ton became the 'senior emperor' 上皇, the title held by his father who died in 1234. Thai-ton remained the ultimate source of authority but was able to share some of the chores of government with his son. The Tran family maintained the same procedure, and the continuing integrity of the senior emperor's authority is illustrated in 1299 when Thai-ton's grandson, now senior emperor, warned his son, the 'emperor', that a new emperor could be appointed if he continued to misbehave. Thai-ton in 1258 was evidently making known whom he intended to succeed him and whom he proposed to train in imperial responsibilities. The Ly rulers had also indicated their preference in selecting heirs and giving them responsibilities, but, as Huu regrets, the formal appointment was always postponed until the rulers were dying. Thai-ton expressed his choice when he was still in the full vigour of life and could protect his son's claim to the throne. The heir was now 'emperor', and his dispossession of the throne when Thai-ton died would be an act of treason.

The significance of the succession procedure of 1258 is enhanced when we observe that the procedure was presented under the guise of the 'learning of antiquity'. Thai-ton's new honorific title incorporated the following words: 'the emperor who is manifesting Yao's sage(-like) old age'. The expression is an allusion to the teachings of Mencius (c. 371-289 BC).

According to Mencius, the sage emperor Yao in his old age associated Shun, who was not of his family, with 'the joint running of the empire'. Shun had become known to Yao because of his extraordinary filial piety. Yao was not abdicating; he was seeking assistance in ruling. Shun proved to be a worthy assistant, and Yao, before he died, ignored his own worthless son and 'presented Shun to Heaven' as the person best suited to succeed him. Shun withdrew from court during the three years of mourning, but the feudal lords did not hail Yao's son as the new emperor when the three years were over. Instead, they turned to Shun, who assumed the dignity of Son of Heaven.

Mencius, the first Chinese philosopher to develop the theme of the succession of sages, attaches great importance to this episode. He explains that Yao did not give the empire to Shun. Only Heaven could do so, and Heaven made its will known through the people's approval of Shun's conduct when he was assisting Yao. Mencius can therefore utter his famous statement that Heaven sees as the people see. But Mencius does not commit himself to the view that an emperor should always be succeeded by a worthy minister. Instead, he quotes Confucius as saying that the succession from father to son was also according to the concept of duty 義 in the sense perhaps that the father was not inappropriately indulging himself by appointing a worthy son to succeed him. Confucius had in mind the three dynasties of Hsia, Shang, and Chou.

The literal understanding of the incorporation of Yao's name in Thai-ton's new title can only be that Thai-ton was making it known that his son was being cast for the role of Shun and that, if all went well, the son would be a worthy successor. The father would satisfy himself that the son deserved to succeed him. Then, according to Mencius's scenario, the Tran princes would turn to the son as enthusiastically as the feudal lords had turned to Shun when Yao died.

I have described the scenario of 1258 because it raises the crucial question of the authority and function of Chinese texts, culled from the 'learning of antiquity', when they were invoked in support of Vietnamese decision making. Le Van Huu respected the 'learning of antiquity' and was at home in Chinese historical literature. Vietnamese attitudes, generated over many centuries, towards these texts seem to lie at the core of our understanding of Huu's cultural identity when he was writing history.

Thai-ton's invocation of Mencius in 1258 is not an isolated example of the use of a Chinese text to reinforce an imperial succession. The sanctity of the Vietnamese dynastic institution could not be taken for granted during the Ly period (1009-1224),²³ and what happened more than a century earlier is so strikingly similar to the scenario of 1258 that it suggests Chinese texts were believed to provide some special security to the imperial succession.

In 1127 the fourth Ly ruler, Nhan-ton, was dying. Because he was childless, some years earlier he had adopted his brother's son. The heir was still young, and his youthfulness as well as the circumstance that this was the first occasion in Ly dynastic history when the ruler would not be succeeded by a natural son made it more than possible that difficulties would arise.²⁴ Indeed, when Nhan-ton died, special policing precautions were taken in the imperial city. In this situation, the outcome of which Nhan-ton could not confidently

²³ See my essay in *Southeast Asian History and Historiography* cited in note 12 above.

²⁴ According to the *TT*, the *Nhan vuong* sutra was recited in 1126. This sutra (*Jen wang*) invokes the Buddha's protection of the country.

predict, he issued a remarkable edict to formalize his choice of heir, and the Vietnamese annals record the measures adopted after his death to execute it. The edict, which survives in the annals, contains the assurance that the heir is well qualified to succeed and orders the publication of Nhan-ton's final instructions. The dying emperor also expresses his wish that the mourning rites should be as frugal as those of Han Wen-ti (180-157 BC).

Nhan-ton's edict is, in fact, a recognizable adaptation of Wen-ti's own death bed edict, preserved in the *Ch'ien Han-shu*.²⁵ The vocabulary is not always identical, but the contents and mood are unmistakably similar, though the Vietnamese version has to break new ground by referring to Nhan-ton's heir and to Wen-ti. Here, then, is another instance of the use of a Chinese text to support a specific and urgent Vietnamese purpose. The occasions in 1127 and 1258 concern the dynastic succession; the only difference is that Thai-ton was not dying in 1258.

Within minutes of Nhan-ton's death his executors in the court, anxious to find out the details of Wen-ti's mourning, would discover (if they had not already known) that they were reading an edict that emphasized the prestige of Wen-ti's imperial ancestors, homage that was now being transferred to Nhan-ton's. They would then realize that Nhan-ton on his death bed was mobilizing the prestige of his imperial family (as Wen-ti had done) to reinforce a succession that members of the Vietnamese court might have suspected was unorthodox because the heir was only a nephew. But why was the style of Wen-ti's edict selected to adorn Nhan-ton's? Some court officials, versed in Chinese historical literature, would recall that Wen-ti, at the beginning of his reign in 179 BC, had stressed the importance of his being succeeded by a worthy heir and was persuaded to nominate his own son.²⁶ Nhan-ton, too, had given special thought to his heir's identity, which is why his edict stresses the heir's qualities. Thus, provided that the Chinese model carried weight, Nhan-ton's edict would be read as conveying the assurance that the succession would be as legitimate and auspicious as the succession of Wen-ti's heir had been. The 'learning of antiquity' would have validated and communicated the assurance. Similarly Tran Thai-ton, by assuming the name of Yao, would have been validating his son's succession by invoking Mencius, who taught the need for prudent succession procedures. He, unlike Nhan-ton, would be conveying the additional assurance that he recognized his obligation to train an heir who would deserve to be hailed as ruler when his father died, but both Nhan-ton and Thai-ton were invoking the 'learning of antiquity' to influence the future by recommending suitable heirs to protect their dynasties.

²⁵ A translation of Nhan-ton's edict, incorporated in *TT*, will be found in Duong Dinh Khue, *Les Chefs d'oeuvre de la Litterature Vietnamiennne* (Saigon, [Kim lai an-quan, 1966]) pp. 10-11. Wen-ti's edict is in the *Ch'ien Han-shu*, ch.4, 17a-18b which is translated by Burton Watson in C. Birch (ed.), *Anthology of Chinese Literature* (New York, Grove Press, 1965) Vol. I, pp. 86-7; and by Homer H. Dubs (ed. & tr.), *The History of the Former Han Dynasty. Translation* (Baltimore, Waverly Press, 1938) Vol. I, pp. 266-72.

²⁶ Dubs, pp. 233-6.

The invoking of Chinese texts to reinforce Vietnamese decisions was not, however, limited to the occasions of imperial successions. According to the annals, in 1010 Ly Thai-to, the founder of the Ly dynasty, transferred his capital from Hoa-lu in the south to Thang-long on the site of present-day Hanoi. He announced his decision in a decree that began by citing examples of ancient Chinese rulers who had also changed their capitals but only when there were good reasons for doing so. He then explained why he was doing so. Here, then, is another example of the apparently validating effect of Chinese textual precedents in Vietnamese decision making.²⁷

Ly Thai-to, a fervent Buddhist whose initial support had come from the monks, is not the only Buddhist in medieval times who strengthened his argument by means of Chinese texts. According to a Buddhist source, Ly Than-ton (1127-1137) asked Vien Thong to explain the causes of stability and instability in the state. Vien Thong's reply draws on ideas attributable to Confucius and Mencius. He has Mencius in mind when he advises Than-ton to win the people's hearts,²⁸ and he is following Confucius when he says that one must 'cultivate in oneself the capacity for easing the lot of the whole populace'.²⁹ In 1202, according to the annals, another monk quoted from the *Book of Songs* to castigate Ly Cao-ton's negligent conduct of affairs. Finally, we can note a detail in Tran Thai-ton's account of his flight from the capital in 1236 in order to meditate in the mountains. A Master of *Dhyana* supports Thai-ton's uncle in urging Thai-ton to resume his official duties, urging him to bear in mind that rulers must identify themselves with the wishes and hearts of the empire. This sentiment is reminiscent of Mencius's urging rulers to share their happiness with the people.³⁰

In all these instances we have been observing how Vietnamese cited Chinese texts in support of specific courses of action in secular affairs. The quotations or allusions always seem to communicate and reinforce authority. What, then, would have been the authority that a Chinese text was seen to possess?

²⁷ A striking, though late example, of this use of Chinese texts is in D.G. Marr, *Vietnamese Anticolonialism, 1885-1925* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971) pp. 49-51.

²⁸ *Dai-Nam thuyen uyien truyen dang tap luc* (EFEO microfilm no. 2767) p. 62a; *M*, IV A, 9, i. For a discussion of textual problems arising out of the records of the Vietnamese Masters of the *Dhyana*, see E. Gaspardone, 'Bibliographie Annamite', *BEFEO*, 34, i (1934) pp. 140-3.

²⁹ *The Analects*, p. 14, xlv. Arthur Waley's translation is in *The Analects of Confucius* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1938) p. 191.

³⁰ *Tran Thai-ton ngu che khoa hu* (preface to the *Thuyen-ton chi-nam*), q. 1, 26, printed in *Viet-nam Phat dien Tung-khan* (Societe Asiatique copy, Ann 1916-1917) (Hanoi, n.p., 1943) p. 7; *M*, I B, 4, iii.

I believe that the text's authority stemmed from the Vietnamese conviction that it embodied the well-tested experience of hallowed antiquity. The experience written into the texts concerned spheres of human activity that had been the insistent concern of the ancient Chinese sages rather than of the teachers of the Mahayana. In particular, the texts were seen to contain valuable practical guidance on matters connected with the welfare of rulers. The original sages had been rulers, and Confucius and Mencius tirelessly advised rulers. And so Vietnamese had long ago developed the habit of identifying and invoking passages in the Chinese books that professed to aid in the successful exercise of power.

The texts were invoked because they embodied the practical experience of antiquity. But the same texts also reflected the profound respect of the Chinese themselves for antiquity, a point that would not have been lost on the Vietnamese. The Chinese approached the texts with the reverence accorded to a literary record of the revelation of the eternal *Tao* by the ancient sage rulers and their successors. Furthermore, the circumstance that the divine wisdom had been written down meant that for the Chinese, and also for the Vietnamese, it was always available and could therefore be regarded as timeless wisdom.³¹ To this extent literate Vietnamese were bound to absorb the Chinese respect for antiquity. But a special circumstance enhanced the Vietnamese respect for antiquity and therefore the authority of a classical text. For the Chinese, and especially as a result of the influence of Han Yu and the Sung neo-Confucian philosophers, the ancient texts became the *point d'appui* for affirming the cultural identity of the Chinese people and for interpreting significant developments in their history. The effects of the ancient learning over the centuries were as important to Chinese scholars as was the ancient learning itself. For the Vietnamese, on the other hand, the ancient texts could not be read as the sacred overture to Vietnamese history. As late as the thirteenth century they did not discern in Chinese antiquity the germs of an internal movement that was to assume the shape of Vietnamese cultural history and link them with antiquity. Instead, antiquity remained self-contained as well as immensely remote, contributing experience of timeless and universal validity when Vietnamese chose to tap it. Because the texts were not the *point d'appui* for understanding Vietnamese history, they were not seen as supplying a critique for later human behaviour. Their contents did not furnish a system of ideas

³¹ I am grateful to Professor Wang Gungwu for his observation during the colloquium on the consequence in a literate society of recording wisdom in texts. All texts, no matter when they were actually written, became, simply because they were written, part of the record of antiquity and equally distant from the present, always available, and to this extent therefore timeless. In one of his writings, Tran Thai-ton mentions Han Yu (768-824) as well as Lao-tzu, Confucius and the Buddha; see *Tran Thai-ton ngu khoa hu* [Exhortation on resolution], q. 1, 11a. He ignores the historical context of these teachers for the reason that their teachings have been recorded and therefore absorbed into the great fund of ancient wisdom.

that, in their entirety, formed a blue-print for the moral order of the universe and the social order of mankind. The texts were not read in order to study a 'Confucianist' ideology. Instead, they would have been seen as resembling an encyclopaedia of recorded wisdom that the Vietnamese could consult in ways that seemed relevant in recognizing specific situations, such as an imperial succession, and the specific measures that those situations seemed to require. A discriminating assessment of the relevance of the sages' teachings, eschewing unreal moralizing concerns, would have come easily to those who had been brought up in a vigorous Buddhist tradition and who envisaged sublime goals in ways that were unacceptable to the Chinese philosophers.

The Chinese texts embodied timeless and authoritative experience on matters that happened to concern the Vietnamese. But why did invoking this limited amount of experience come easily to them? After all, they were surrounded by Buddhist influences, encouraged by the Ly and Tran courts, and they were fiercely aware of their independence from China whenever China, as in Kublai Khan's day, challenged their independence. I believe that there were two reasons why they were able to invoke the texts selectively. In the first place, they were familiar with them simply because the texts would have been read by those who wanted to become literate in order to be chosen to occupy subordinate posts in the administration. But another reason for paying attention to Chinese texts was supplied by Tran Thai-ton and shows why he invoked Mencius in staging the succession procedure in 1258.

Thai-ton, Le Van Huu's contemporary, states in his preface to the *Thien-ton chi-nam* (A Guide to the Dhyana):

Those who transmitted rules through the generations and laid guidelines were greatly honoured by the former sages. For this reason Hui-neng [the sixth patriarch of the *Dhyana* school of Buddhism in southern China] once said that there was no difference between the sages and the great Buddhist teachers. I can draw on the example of the former sages when I transmit the teachings of Buddhism. Cannot I make the responsibility of the sages my own responsibility in teaching Buddhism?³²

Thai-ton is explaining his role as a Buddhist teacher by comparing it with the teaching function of the sages, whose special characteristic he sees as laying down rules to influence later generations. He, a devout Buddhist and indifferent to the sages' moral values, readily acknowledges a particular quality of the ancient learning: its teachings were concerned with plans for the future.

³² *Ibid.*, q. 1, 27a.

Thus, in the setting of the scenario of 1258, he is recognizing Mencius as the teacher who recommended prescience in selecting a suitable imperial heir. In his preface to the *Thien-ton chi-nam* he states that planners were honoured by the sages, and he is no doubt confident that he is making arrangements in 1258 that Mencius would have approved. He is responding to the sage's teachings by appointing a worthy person, his son, as his associate in order to try out his capacity as the future ruler. By assuming the new style of 'Yao', he is communicating an authoritative assurance, based on the experience of antiquity, in order to win support for his decision.

I have attempted to explain what Vietnamese literati believed to be the authority and function of Chinese texts when they quoted from them for their own purposes, and I shall now return to Le Van Huu's cultural identity as a historian. His attitude towards the 'learning of antiquity' need no longer be ambiguous. He is as familiar with Mencius as Thai-ton is, and Mencius is the classical writer whom he seems to invoke most frequently in order to validate the observations he makes in his comments on Vietnamese history.

He quotes Mencius in his eulogy of Trieu Da when he observes that rulers with *virtus* need not come from a particular part of the world.³³ This statement, based on antiquity, is the basis for his claim that Vietnam is an independent country under its sage ruler. He can therefore compare Trieu Da with Shun and Wen Wang; the three rulers exhibited *virtus*, benevolence and a sense of duty. Similarly, he has Mencius in mind when he assumes that all genuine rulers must be sages.³⁴ He shares Mencius's concern, and also Thai-ton's, with the influence of rulers on the future.³⁵ He is quoting Mencius when he says that the family is the 'root' of the state, a proposition that he invokes to insist that an imperial father should be succeeded by his son.³⁶ He even arms himself with Mencius's teaching on the deposition of rulers when he states that a Vietnamese ruler who opens the frontiers to China must be replaced.³⁷

What are Huu's intentions when he validates his comments with quotations from Mencius? Under cover of and reinforced by the teaching of antiquity, he seems to be promoting two assertions of extraordinary importance in his own lifetime.

³³ *TT* under date of 137 BC; *M*, IV B, 1, i-iv.

³⁴ *TT* under date of 184 and especially of 968. On Mencius's identification of sages and emperors, see Fung Yu-lan, *A History of Chinese Philosophy* (translated by D. Bodde) (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 1952) Vol. I, pp. 115-17.

³⁵ *TT* under dates of 981 and 1154. Mencius has much to say on the continuing influence of sage rulers; see for example, *M*, I B, 14, iii; *M*, II B, 13, iii; and *M*, IV B, 22, i.

³⁶ *TT* under date of 1129; *M*, IV A, 5.

³⁷ *TT* under date of 111 BC; *M*, V B, 9, i. Huu's comment also refers to I Yin, who banished a bad ruler. For information on I Yin, see *M*, VII A, 31, i.

His first assertion, as we have frequently seen, is that the Vietnamese court is the court of an empire that is as independent and imperial as the Chinese empire and had been so since the beginning of the Han period in Chinese history. The assertion is made at a time when Kublai Khan is trying to demolish Vietnamese court protocol. Huu is able to demonstrate his assertion by construing Mencius's teaching to render Trieu Da as the founder of an empire and by quoting Han and Sung texts with devastating effect to show that Trieu Da and Le Hoan had presided over an independent court with Chinese connivance, in spite of the tributary relationship. Both these rulers relied, as Thai-ton did, on diplomacy to retain the substance of independence. He clinches his validation of Vietnamese independence by enclosing his comments in a literary form sufficiently adorned with such Chinese historiographical features as a golden age, dynastic sequence, a concern with orthodox imperial succession, and didactic comments that it resembles the type of history that could be appropriately submitted to an imperial court. He has the same respect for the authenticating style of documentation that marks Nhan-ton's edict, the parallel version of Wen-ti's. His respect matches his own comment on the importance of an embellished imperial text.³⁸

The assertion of the Vietnamese court's equality with the Chinese court is an exegesis on the reality of the independence that Thai-ton and his heir were heroically defending. Huu's second assertion is as important as his first one, and it is an exegesis on Thai-ton's prescience: Vietnam will always be in great danger if its ruler neglects Mencius's advice on regulating the succession. And so Huu shows the result of disregarding the experience of antiquity. Vietnamese dynasties had either been short-lived, brought down by feuding which enabled the Sung to exploit the situation in 980,³⁹ or had been insecure because the Ly rulers had postponed their heirs' appointment until the rulers were dying. Only prescient rulers, by invoking the experience of antiquity, can avoid imperilling the country in this way. Those in the Tran court who read Huu's history would be left in no doubt that the scenario of 1258 commanded the acceptance of Thai-ton's authoritative assurance that the dynasty would survive and continue to provide leadership in defending the country from the Mongols.

³⁸ *TT* under date of 1028. Huu regrets that the *nho* could not embellish the name of the first Ly ruler's tomb. For 'embellishing' he uses an expression in *The Analects* (p. 14, 9) where Confucius describes the four stages in preparing official decrees. 'Embellishment' is the final stage.

³⁹ The *TT*, under date of 980 and incorporating a Chinese source, quotes a Chinese border official as advising the Sung court that dynastic confusion in Vietnam was China's opportunity for recovering the province.

Did Huu make these two assertions because he had been ordered to do so when he was commissioned to edit Vietnamese history? I believe that this is an unreal question. Learning for a *nho* was always in support of the state, and the great contemporary issues of independence and the succession were issues on which the authoritative guidance of antiquity was abundantly available. Moreover, sufficient *rapport* already existed between the ruler and the *nho* to encourage Huu to invoke the 'learning of antiquity' when he commented on Vietnamese history. The court's appeal to 'ancient customs' in its memorials to Kublai Khan, which the *nho* helped to draft, was an open invitation for Huu to assemble the texts that validated the court's sense of precedents; diplomatic exigency may well have been the specific reason why Huu was ordered to edit Vietnamese history. But Thai-ton's recognition in 1258 of Mencius's wisdom was also an open invitation for Huu to mobilize textual authority on behalf of Thai-ton's heir. Assurances based on antiquity had therefore already been communicated to Huu, and his obedient response was inevitable. While he was the Tran spokesman, he was also the spokesman of the *nho* in support of the Tran.

E. Balazs, discussing Chinese historical literature, asks: 'Qui est l'auteur et qui sont ses lecteurs? La réponse est nette: l'histoire est écrite *par des fonctionnaires pour les fonctionnaires*'.⁴⁰ Huu is not this kind of historian. His readers are imperial princes and not the Vietnamese people in general. But he is also in a cultural tradition that permits him to handle Chinese forms without being influenced by Chinese perceptions of the past. He appropriates Mencius in order to show that the past has, with the exception of Trieu Da, yielded nothing that provides a faultless model for the imperial institution before Thai-ton's reign. Dominating his attitude towards the past is the living example of Thai-ton, a Vietnamese sage emperor, for whose foreign and domestic policies Huu's history is not only a transparent tribute but also an authoritative validation.

Huu's *Dai Viet Su Ky* seems to have made some impact on the Tran court. The evidence is in the subsequent prestige of that singular figure, Trieu Da. When the Hung-dao prince, the hero of the Mongol wars, was dying in 1300, the 'emperor' Anh-ton visited him and asked what measures should be taken if the 'northern bandits' attacked again. The prince replied by referring to Vietnamese heroes who had successfully resisted invaders, and the first name in his list is that of Trieu Da. There is also an inter-linear note in the Vietnamese annals immediately after the notice of Trieu Da's death in 137 BC which states that the later Tran, who tried to recover power after Ho Quy Ly's family was defeated by the Ming army in 1407, conferred on Trieu Da the grandiloquently imperial title of *Khai-thien the dao thanh vu than triet hoang de*.⁴¹ Finally, Huu's influence is

⁴⁰ E. Balazs, 'L'histoire comme guide de la pratique bureaucratique . . .' in *Historians of China and Japan*, p. 82.

⁴¹ Translated: 'The emperor who opened the Way of Heaven's blessings by his sage-like military power and holy wisdom'.

seen in a passage of probably the most famous work of medieval Vietnamese literature. I am referring to Nguyen Trai's *Binh Ngo dai cao* ('Great Proclamation upon the Pacification of the Wu'), issued in 1428 on behalf of the founder of the Le Dynasty after he had defeated the Ming occupation army.

Mountains and rivers have demarcated the borders [of our country]. The customs of the North [China] and the South [Vietnam] are also different. We find [in antiquity] that the Trieu, Dinh, Ly, and Tran [dynasties] built our country. Alongside the Han, T'ang, Sung, and Yuan [dynasties], the rulers [of our dynasties] ruled as emperors over their own part [of the world represented by the North and South].⁴²

Much had happened in the century and a half that separated Nguyen Trai from Le Van Huu, but Huu's textually validated assertion of the coexistence and equality of the Vietnamese and Chinese 'empires' was as acceptable and timely to the Le court as it had been to the Tran court. Le Loi, the founder of the Le dynasty, was as determined to maintain his country's independence in face of the Ming invaders as Thai-ton had been to maintain it in face of Kublai Khan's intimidating edicts. And so Trai readily prolongs the sequence of Vietnamese imperial dynasties from Trieu Da into the period that corresponded in time with the Mongol Yuan dynasty, the predecessor of the aggressive Ming dynasty.

Trai would never have imagined that Huu needed to justify his country's status by appealing to Chinese historical records. Kublai's bullying did not call forth a Chinese-style history of Vietnamese independence that had to be neatly documented by chronologically apt quotations from Chinese sources or reflect the cyclical framework that enabled Chinese historians to organize their perception of dynastic and cultural time. Instead, the Mongol challenge mobilized a very different approach to the function of texts that had evolved over the centuries within a Vietnamese cultural tradition and came instinctively to Le Van Huu. Huu discloses what he sees as the function of texts when he quotes Mencius to justify the ancient imperial status of the Vietnamese court or to criticize the weaknesses of the Ly court in a manner that can only mean that he regards Thai-ton as a safe ruler and is validating Thai-ton's succession

⁴² *Uc Trai Tap*, q. 3, 9a (1868 printing in the library of the Societe Asiatique). Also see Truong Buu Lam, *Patterns of Vietnamese Response to Foreign Intervention: 1858-1900* (Yale Southeast Asia Studies. Monograph series no. 11) (New Haven, Yale University Southeast Asia Studies, 1967) pp. 34-5. For a 15th century poem on Trieu Da, based on the Chinese textual information exploited by Huu, see Ly Tu Cau's poem in Bui Bich, *Hoang Viet thi tuyen* (H.M. 2214 in the library of the Societe Asiatique), q. 3, 6a. Cau was a famous *nho* in the first half of the 15th century. His poem refers to Trieu Da's imperial court and the Lac country (Vietnam)'s resolve to resist China.

procedure of 1258. His appeal to Mencius matches that of the Buddhist Thai-ton in 1258. Thai-ton and Huu, and, I believe, all Vietnamese *nho* at that time, recognized the texts of antiquity not as a source of historical evidence but as an authoritative reservoir of recorded experiential knowledge that was contextually neutral and therefore of universal and timeless validity, and was also always available to supply and communicate persuasive assurances that Vietnamese decision-making exemplified considerations that commanded the maximum respect.

RELIGIOUS HISTORICAL WRITING AND THE LEGITIMATION OF THE FIRST BANGKOK REIGN

Craig J. Reynolds

The reign of Rama I (1782-1809), the founding king of the Chakri or Bangkok dynasty, has long been known for its voluminous literary output. Chronicles, epic poetry, legal codes, and religious texts all issued from the court during the reign, with the king himself credited as either the author or the one who commissioned the compilation of most of this literature. As far as the chronicles are concerned, the tasks of establishing firm chronology and gleaning facts for political or religious history have preoccupied most scholars, and such is the state of Thai historiography that historians are still sorting out the authorships of, and the relationships among, the various recensions of the Ayudhya chronicle which date from this reign. Indeed, students of Ayudhya history are much indebted to Rama I and his court for collecting and copying this material; without it, our understanding of Ayudhya's political and legal institutions would be all the more deficient.

But so urgent have been the editorial and bibliographical tasks for modern scholars that many interesting questions have remained unasked. What would happen, for example, if we were to look at one of these chronicles not for its data — its reign dates, its battles, or the piety of its kings — but for its place in a social and political context, if we were to look at its 'form' as well as its 'content'? In what ways was the surge of textual compilation and revision that took place in this period not merely a matter of book-keeping but actually a part of the political process, a stage in the growth of Rama I's hold on the affairs of state? This essay is an attempt to confront these questions with respect to the *Chronicle of Buddhist Councils (Sangitiyavamsa)*, dated A.D. 1789 (hereafter, *1789 Chronicle*).¹

Rama I acceded to the throne as a warrior king preoccupied with the defence of the kingdom and with social, economic and political instability. The wars with Burma that had devastated the capital of Ayudhya in 1767 continued until 1802, when Thai armies finally drove the Burmese from the north; the first twenty years of the reign also saw the subjugation of tributary states to the northeast (Laos), to the east (Cambodia), and to the south (the Malay states).² The military achievement of restoring territorial integrity to the

¹ Somdet Phra Phonnarat, *Sangkhitiyawong, phongsawadan ruang sangkhayana phratham phrawinai* (translated by Phraya Pariyattithammathada) (Bangkok, 1923). Hereafter, *1789 Chronicle*.

² K. Wenk, *The Restoration of Thailand under Rama I, 1782-1809* (translated by G. Stahl) (Monographs and Papers of the Association for Asian Studies, vol. XXIV) (Tucson, University of Arizona Press, 1968) ch. 4.

Thai state was not Rama I's own, however. His most able general was his brother, the Front Palace Prince, and the work of re-establishing Thai sovereignty and suzerainty had already begun in the reign of Rama I's predecessor, King Taksin.

Taksin was responsible for moving the capital from Ayudhya, which had been the royal base for 400 years, to Thonburi, across the river from Bangkok where Rama I finally settled. For both Taksin and Rama I, the shift of the capital southward and the task of building a new royal base are noteworthy for their symbolic significance no less than for the considerable logistical and physical problems they entailed (the resettlement of the population; the transport of building materials down river from Ayudhya to Bangkok for new monasteries, palaces and fortifications; canal construction, rechanneling of the river, and flood control). Both kings were separating themselves from a discredited dynasty and starting out afresh. Like a newly born Indra who cannot inherit the palaces, retinues and concubines of a predecessor but must be endowed with these anew, both Taksin and Rama I had to build a wholly new capital, appoint new ministers and develop a new network of marriage alliances with nobles and vassals to secure loyalties. At the same time, neither Taksin nor Rama I was a blood relative of the last Ayudhya dynasty, and one way to overcome this weakness of genealogy was to demonstrate faithfulness to tradition. One of the reasons the period is so interesting, then, is that the kings at Thonburi and early Bangkok offer us the circumstances for seeing how the myth of the fresh start and the myth of continuity combine in a ritual of renewal. Can the *1789 Chronicle* tell us anything about how this ritual was enacted in the reign of Rama I?

At least one other reason that students of Thailand are interested in the late eighteenth century is that Buddhism and the *sangha* underwent important changes in this period. Here again, the *1789 Chronicle* may shed some light on this subject, since Rama I saw his patronage of Buddhism as a corrective to Taksin's mysticism and abuse of the monkhood. Taksin abdicated, his rule having collapsed after he evinced signs of madness, and this 'madness' was clothed in certain religious behaviour.³ The king took an interest in Pali and Malay texts on meditation and received advice from a high ranking monk on yoga technique.⁴ According to one European account, Taksin hoped that his ascetic practices would give him the white blood of the gods and the ability to fly.⁵ Having heard the supreme

³ The term 'madness' has various renderings in Thai. See, for example, the language used by two Chakri princes in Damrong Rajanubhab and Sommot Ammoraphan, *Ruang tang phrarachakhana phuyai nai krung rattanakosin* (Bangkok, 1923) p. 74 (hereafter, *On Appointments*); and Sommot Ammoraphan, *Prakat kanphraratchaphithi* (Bangkok, Khurusapha Press, 1965) Vol. I, p. 10.

⁴ Evidence of Taksin's mysticism is in Royal Institute, comp., *Phraratchaphongsawadan krung thonburi phaendin somdet phraborommaracha thi 4 (phrachao taksin)* (Bangkok, 1919) pp. 179-80 (hereafter, *Royal Chronicle of Thonburi*). See also C.J. Reynolds, 'The Buddhist Monkhood in Nineteenth Century Thailand' (Ph.D. thesis, Cornell, 1973) ch. 2.

⁵ J.G. Koenig, 'Journal of a Voyage from India to Siam and Malacca in 1779', *JSBRAS*, 26 (January 1894) pp. 164-5.

patriarch of the *sangha* read out the thirty-two *mahapurisa* marks of the Buddha, he identified twelve of them on his own person and, in the most far-reaching ambition of all, he envisioned himself as a *sotapanna* (stream winner), a type of deity who had embarked on the first four stages to enlightenment: stream-winner, once-returner, never-returner, *arahat*.⁶

This behaviour, characteristic of Buddhist practice at a time when power was dispersed and rebellious monks claimed supernatural abilities, might not in itself have brought about his downfall, but Taksin, in pressing for confirmation of his exalted spiritual status, required high ranking monks to prostrate themselves before him in recognition of this status. Those who refused were punished. The highest ranking monks, including the supreme patriarch, were replaced, and more than 500 monks who had taken a stand against Taksin were flogged and sentenced to menial labour at the monastery of the new supreme patriarch.⁷ The schism in the *sangha* ostensibly created by this incident alone was really symptomatic of the disunity and institutional chaos that troubled the Buddhist monkhood in the years following the fall of Ayudhya in 1767. Even after Rama I came to the throne in 1782 and reinstated the supreme patriarch and others who had taken a stand against Taksin, the faction that formed around the now demoted favourites of Taksin continued to cause dissension in the *sangha*, a dissension as bitter and disruptive as any in the annals of Thai history. The harsh language in the 'laws' on the *sangha* used by Rama I to reprimand the offenders testifies to the strength of the conflict, and these 'laws', as well as other documents, make clear that schism in the form of controversy over monastic discipline was rife at the time.⁸ Again, we may ask of the *1789 Chronicle* if it can tell us how schism in the *sangha* affected, or was reflected in, the legitimizing process.

Before seeking enlightenment from the *Chronicle* on any of the questions raised above, we must first establish the kind of document it is, the identity of its author, and a passing familiarity with its contents. The event which the *Chronicle* commemorates and describes in its eighth chapter is commonly referred to as the 'Tripitaka Revision and Council of 1788', during which monks and lay Buddhist scholars met in Bangkok to make an inventory of Pali texts and produce an authentic edition of the Canon. In its selection of events to narrate, the arrangement of those events, the relationship between the monarchy and the *sangha* on which it dwells throughout, and its reliance on certain sources, it belongs to a genre of religious historical writing whose

⁶ Iaming and P. Phitsanakha, *Somdet phrachao taksin maharat* (Bangkok, 1956) p. 424.

⁷ *Royal Chronicle of Thonburi*, pp. 197-8.

⁸ See Reynolds for a reconstruction of the schisms based on the chronicles and the *sangha* laws.

progenitor is the Great Chronicle of Sri Lanka, the *Mahavamsa*.⁹ In Thailand there are at least four representatives of this genre: the *Jinakalamali* (A.D. 1516/17); the *Mulasasana* (the main body of which is dated A.D. 1420s); the *Camadevivamsa* (mid-fifteenth century); and the *Ratanabimbavamsa* (possibly A.D. 1429), the chronicle of the Emerald Buddha.¹⁰ So close is the relationship of the *1789 Chronicle* to these others that four of its nine chapters draw material from the *Jinakalamali*, and numerous stanzas derive directly from the *Mahavamsa* and other Pali works. The Bangkok court, having produced its own version of this genre in the *1789 Chronicle*, shortly thereafter had the *Jinakalamali* and the *Mahavamsa* translated from Pali into Thai, in 1794 and 1797 respectively.¹¹

All the chronicles in this genre rely on the *Mahavamsa* as a model and, like the *Mahavamsa*, have as their theme one of two subjects: royal support for preserving the Buddha's teachings, especially by supporting the lineal succession of the *sangha*; and the history of a particular relic or image.¹² The core of this chronicle tradition centred on the Buddha's life, the patronage of Buddhism exemplified by the third century Mauryan monarch, Asoka, and the spread of Buddhism, especially to Sri Lanka in the mission of Mahinda.¹³ One of the fundamental presuppositions of the *Mahavamsa* chronicle tradition was that Sri Lanka was destined by the Buddha to be the repository of the true doctrine, thus binding the fate of the doctrine to the contingencies of the political history of the island.¹⁴

⁹ I use the term *Mahavamsa* to embrace the three stages in the development of the Pali chronicle of Sri Lanka: the *Dipavamsa*, the *Mahavamsa*, and the *Culavamsa*. See L.S. Perera, 'The Pali Chronicle of Ceylon' in C.H. Philips (ed.), *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (London, O.U.P., 1961) pp. 29-43.

¹⁰ Anan Ganjanapan, 'Early Lan Na Thai Historiography: An Analysis of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century Chronicles' (M.A. thesis, Cornell, 1976). The arrival of the *Mahavamsa* in Thailand has not been dated exactly, but this group of chronicles strongly suggests a 15th century date. Also, a list of texts presented to a Burmese monastery in an inscription of A.D. 1442 includes the *Mahavamsa*. See M.H. Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma* (London, Luzac & Co. for RASGBI, 1966) (repr. ed.) appendix to ch. III.

¹¹ Prince Dhani Nivat, 'The Reconstruction of Rama I of the Chakri Dynasty' in *Collected Articles by H.H. Prince Dhani Nivat, Reprinted from the Journal of the Siam Society on the Occasion of his Eighty-fourth Birthday* (Bangkok, Siam Society, 1969) p. 157; Ratanapanna Thera, *The Sheaf of Garlands of the Epochs of the Conqueror* (translated by N.A. Jayawickrama) (London, 1968) p. xxxv. Hereafter, Jkm. translation.

¹² *Jinakalamali*, *Mulasasana*, and the *1789 Chronicle* belong to the former category; *Camadevivamsa* and *Ratanabimbavamsa* to the latter. All are in Pali with the exception of *Mulasasana* which is in the northern Thai language, Tai Yuan.

¹³ Perera, p. 29.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

As the introduction to the 1923 published edition of the *1789 Chronicle* says of that document, it is 'a history of Buddhism combined with the history of the kingdom', a statement which would apply equally well to the other chronicles in the genre.¹⁵ These chronicles, written by monks so that other monks would be cognizant of the vicissitudes of secular rulers in their support for the religion, glorified kings for their meritorious works and religious patronage and set criteria by which kings knew they would be judged.¹⁶ In Sri Lanka this tradition of religious historical writing ends with the British occupation of the Kandyan kingdom in 1815 A.D., and in Thailand the genre comes to an end at roughly the same time with the *1789 Chronicle*; no more chronicles like this are forthcoming.

The temporal framework of major concern in this historiographical tradition, a framework explicit in the *1789 Chronicle*, spanned a finite period of 5,000 years during which the Buddha's teachings would endure. Over this period, a brief moment 'within the abstract infinitude of cosmic time in which there are earlier buddhas and buddhas-to-be',¹⁷ the practice of Buddhism would suffer a gradual but relentless deterioration.

The author of the *1789 Chronicle* was a participant in the Council of 1788 and headed one of the four divisions of scholars organized to work on the Bangkok court's edition of the *Tripitaka*. He was born in 1735 and in middle age found himself favoured by Taksin in two respects.¹⁸ Taksin sent him to Phitsanulok principality in the north to bring order to the *sangha* after 1767, and the king subsequently conferred on him the high ecclesiastical rank of Vimaladhamma (Thai: Phimonlatham) and the abbotship of a small monastery on the Bangkok side of the river destined to become the Jetavana monastery under Rama I. It was at this monastery that he taught King Mongkut's uncle, Prince Paramanuchit, one of the most distinguished scholar-monks of the nineteenth century. But under Taksin, Vimaladhamma, along with other recalcitrant monks, lost his rank when he refused to prostrate himself and recognize Taksin's claims to exalted spiritual status. Rama I, upon his accession in 1782, reversed the punishments by reinstating Vimaladhamma and the others Taksin had discredited and by demoting Taksin's favourites. In 1794 the king made him *somdet* Phra Vanaratana (Thai: Phonnarat), the name by which he is known as the author of several histories, including the 'two-volume' recension of the Ayudhya annals.¹⁹

¹⁵ *1789 Chronicle*, p. 10. See also the introduction to the Thai translation of the *Mahavamsa*; Mahanama, *Mahawong Lem 3* (Bangkok, n.p., 1920) pp. ii-iii.

¹⁶ Perera, p. 39; B.G. Gokhale, 'The Theravada Buddhist View of History'. *JAOS*, 85, iii (1965) p. 356.

¹⁷ D.K. Wyatt, 'Chronicle Traditions in Thai Historiography' in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters (eds.), *Southeast Asian History and Historiography, Essays Presented to D.G.E. Hall* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1976) pp. 115-16.

¹⁸ Biographical data in this paragraph come from *On Appointments*.

¹⁹ Tri Amatyakul, 'Phutaeng nangsu phraratchaphongsawadan chabap phim 2 lem', *Sinlapakon*, 5, vi (1962) pp. 43-50 and 6, i (1962) pp. 25-34. See also Wyatt, p. 121.

Finally, one incidental fact suggests a clue to the character of this monk, whose life, as far as we know it today, is otherwise lacking in human interest. All biographers of Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana mention that when Rama I was planning to build a bridge for elephants to cross one of the canals that ringed Bangkok, the scholarly monk advised the king against such a bridge on strategic grounds: the king's enemies would thus have easy access to the royal base. The king heeded this advice. Trivial as the incident may seem, it suggests that this monk was a man of the world, perhaps even a worldly man, and that he was as capable of offering military advice as of compiling Pali chronicles. This worldliness of monks seems to have been a sign of the times, when the exigencies of military defence called for the skills of everyone, even those of Buddhist monks. Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana's mirror opposite, a monk who had been Taksin's supreme patriarch, who also held for a time the position of Vanaratana, who also helped Taksin restore order in the northern *sangha*, and who also served on the Council of 1788 even after disciplinary violations, once negotiated with a rebel on Taksin's behalf, hardly behaviour to be condoned by a strict interpretation of the *Vinaya*.²⁰

From this biographical sketch three points emerge which are germane to the argument of this essay. First, Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana experienced on one side, and then the other, the schisms in the *sangha* that troubled the reigns of Taksin and Rama I. Second, he was not a recluse; rather, he was close to the court and to the administrative and political problems it faced in resettling the population in a new capital. Third, this monk's high status in the *sangha* as well as his numerous historical writings indicate that the king had chosen him not only to preserve the integrity of the Thai past but also to celebrate the Bangkok court's own accomplishments in government and its return to Theravada orthodoxy. His audience for a chronicle in Pali was the *sangha* and his purpose in compiling such a document was to reassure the monkhood that Rama I's generous patronage in sponsoring the Council of 1788 and firm leadership in efforts to resolve conflict and restore discipline in the *sangha* would bring stability to the kingdom after a disorienting period.

Despite these recommendations that Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana's history of the 1788 Council might be a valuable document, historians have tended to pass over it for a variety of understandable reasons. Heavy reliance on a common core of Pali sources and the strict conventions of the *Mahavamsa* genre account, to some extent, for the scant attention paid to the work. Seven of the nine chapters add little that is fresh to our knowledge of Buddhism in South Asia or Thailand: chapter 1 narrates the life of the Buddha and the first three Councils, concluding with that of Asoka in the third century B.C.; chapter 2 tells of the coming of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and ends with material from the *Jinakalamali*; chapters 3-6 reproduce the last sections of that same chronicle; chapter 9 enumerates the merit resulting from various good works and ends with the five *antaradhana* or stages in the disappearance of the religion. Only chapters 7 and 8 promise the historian something unique.

²⁰ On *Appointments*, pp. 74-5.

Chapter 7 is a recension of the annals of Ayudhya, a recension hitherto neglected but now thought to form part of a chronicle tradition that dates to the first half of the seventeenth century.²¹ Chapter 8 is the story of the 1788 Council, reckoned as the ninth in the lineage of Councils. But even chapters 7 and 8 offer little that cannot be found in other sources. Coedès, who seems to have covered every inch of the scholarly map in Southeast Asian classical studies, has been here as well, having transcribed and translated the annals of chapter 7, and although the French scholar said he was not going to pass judgement on the value of chapter 7 as a historical source, his remarks clearly indicate that he was not very impressed with the *1789 Chronicle* as a whole. It was not, he said, an original work, but a compilation of various parts and pieces arranged without much skill.²² The passages compiled by Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana were maladroit in style and often incorrect. In all fairness to the *Chronicle*, however, its redundancies in the early chapters had led Coedès to concentrate on the annals only to translate them and to provide occasional notes on dating and comparative references to other recensions. It was not his task to inquire into the role the text might have played in the history of the time.

We can set about discovering some relationship between the *Chronicle* and the founding of a new dynasty by looking more closely at the language used to describe the events between 1767 and 1788. In the space of these twenty years, according to the *Chronicle*, the kingdom underwent a profound transformation. The fall of Ayudhya in 1767 threw the Thai state into chaos, disrupting normal social life, causing economic and material deprivations, and dividing the population into factions which contended with each other for scarce resources.²³ The harsh conditions broke up families, and food was in short supply. Many Buddhist monks, finding that they could not survive in the ordained state, disrobed and went off into lay life to seek their own livelihoods. Buddhism suffered in other ways as well, as disrespectful people committed violence against Buddha images and scavenged libraries for the cloth and cords that bound the Pali scriptures, thus leaving them prey to insects. Enough pious people survived to keep the Buddha's religion alive; parts of the *Tripitaka* were collected for safekeeping and monks eventually returned to their ruined monasteries to rebuild. But for most people the age was a dark age, the *kali-yuga*, and the period following the fall of Ayudhya is so designated in the *Chronicle*.

²¹ M. Vickery in his review of the newly translated van Vliet recension of the Ayudhya chronicle proposes that van Vliet's source and the annals in the *1789 Chronicle* share a common parentage. See *JSS*, 64, ii (1976) pp. 207-36.

²² G. Coedès, 'Une recension palie des annales d'Ayuthia', *BEFEO*, 14, iii (1914) p. 3. The edition of the *1789 Chronicle* used by Coedès and that published in 1923 (cited in this essay) are slightly different. See Vickery, note 3.

²³ *1789 Chronicle*, pp. 408-12.

at the end of the annals in chapter 7.²⁴ In classical Indian society a people without a king is like a river without water;²⁵ and so it is in central Siam at this time. Life without a king was intolerable and unthinkable. At the conclusion of chapter 7 the kingdom is split into four regions, each with its own regional overlord, and Taksin has begun to undermine the power of these regional overlords in his striving for a unified kingdom.

Chapter 8, which records the Tripitaka Council of 1788, begins with Taksin still the pre-eminent political and military figure, but his harsh exactions turn the people against him after fourteen years of rule. He destroys many towns and removes large numbers of people from the south to his capital at Thonburi. When he shows signs of madness in 1781, 'the people' become angry, turn against him, and kill him.²⁶ Then come the Chakri brothers, who had resolved long before this date that they would deliver the people from suffering but who had to bide their time until the right moment. They were merit-filled and compassionate ('they loved Buddhism more than their own lives')²⁷ and saw that Buddhism was threatened; scriptures, *stupa*, relics, and monastery buildings had been destroyed. Their campaigns to restore order become, in the framework of the 1789 *Chronicle*, a struggle against the enemies of Buddhism, those with *a-dhamma* (absence of *dhamma* – disorder, disharmony, unrighteousness). It is worth noting here that military regimes in Thailand stayed in power after World War II by maintaining a siege or crisis mentality and at times a state of martial law in order to protect the kingdom against Communists who, as many Thais point out, are atheists and enemies of Buddhism. In other words, social conflict, or the mere threat of it, thus enjoins a religious battle. In the 1789 *Chronicle* the monarchy also protects the people against the enemies of religion, the lawless, the disrespectful, and in the narrative this responsibility now requires the construction of a new city which will protect its residents just as a Buddhist amulet protects its possessor.

It would be useful to linger for a moment on the descriptive detail of the new city, because it tells us something about the social meaning of the *Chronicle*. The description of the newly constructed city is, of course, laudatory, but it aims at a particular effect. The visual experience of seeing the city is sensual, and to gaze on the palaces and pavilions, their glittering tiles and pediments studded with crystal and mother-of-pearl catching the bright sunlight, is to be transported to the homes of the gods. The narrator makes comparisons with

²⁴ In classical Indian society men live in one of four ages according to the king's adherence to *dharma*. See J.W. Spellman, *Political Theory of Ancient India* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964) pp. 111, 212.

²⁵ J. Gonda, *Ancient Indian Kingship from the Religious Point of View* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1966) p. 47.

²⁶ 1789 *Chronicle*, p. 423.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 438.

various heavenly palaces and shrines by the use of appropriate similes: a palanquin for a Buddha image 'was covered with gold and silver as beautiful as the palace of a *brahma*'.²⁸ These similes were not just to call forth recognition of familiar architectural forms or set a standard of beauty. By likening the terrestrial to the celestial, they also blurred the distinction between the heavenly world and the world of man; in reading the text, one is not certain whether the Indra being described is in his heaven or on one of the pavilion tympanums. The ambiguity thus created was one way the principal resident of the city, the king, acquired divine attributes.²⁹ The architecture, recreated here in a literary mode, was a metaphor that set the king apart in a sacred, albeit not unambiguously sacred, category.

To experience this heavenly city (*krung deva* – the city of the god or Indra) was not just to admire its visual beauty but to derive from it physical satisfaction: 'it brought great pleasure and contentment'.³⁰ Just as King Ramkhamhaeng was proud of his thirteenth century capital at Sukhothai, crowded 'to the bursting point' with people merrily celebrating a Buddhist festival day,³¹ so the author of the *1789 Chronicle* describes Rama I's capital as a city where people may experience pleasure and contentment. The heavenly city would attract people to come and resettle in the Chao Phraya River delta. It is a lure, a promise, for with its construction and the increasing dependence of the population on the two Chakri brothers the people of Bangkok 'were protected from their enemies, from the lawless, and from danger, and were allowed to pursue their livelihoods in happiness'.³² Food became more abundant and monks returned to their monasteries to study and practise meditation, free from anxiety about finding their next meal. Moreover, the advent of a king meant that collective efforts on a large scale, heretofore beyond the capacities of individuals or small groups of people, were now possible. One such effort, mentioned in the *Chronicle* as 'difficult for individuals to

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 430. *Brahma* deities, not to be confused with the Indian god Brahma, are meritorious creatures who exist above the world of sensation and desire. See C.J. Reynolds, 'Buddhist Cosmography in Thai History, with Special Reference to Nineteenth-Century Culture Change', *JAS*, 35, ii (1976) pp. 204-5.

²⁹ I.W. Mabbett, 'Devaraja', *JSEAH*, 10, ii (1969) p. 217. In an unpublished paper, 'South-East Asian Conceptions of Kingship', p. 21, Dr Mabbett widens this notion of ambiguity by saying 'there is nothing uniquely Cambodian about this preoccupation with matching microcosmos to macrocosmos'.

³⁰ *1789 Chronicle*, p. 433.

³¹ A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, 'Epigraphic and Historical Studies No. 9: The Inscription of Ramkhamhaeng of Sukhothai (1292 A.D.)', *JSS*, 59, ii (1971) pp. 209-11.

³² *1789 Chronicle*, p. 434.

accomplish', was the damming and rechannelling of the river.³³ Here the achievements of a people governed by a king are no different from those in an eleventh century Old Javanese inscription which records a flood control project successfully accomplished after individual effort had failed and the people had appealed to the ruler.³⁴

The rest of chapter 8 tells of the Tripitaka Council which produced an intact and authentic edition of the Canon, an event which restored the religion to good health after the depredations of earlier years. The transformation that occurs, then, from the anarchy and chaos of 1767 to the peaceful and orderly society of 1788, is complete. Abundance, prosperity, and contentment have replaced scarcity, deprivation, and misery. And these better conditions permit people to lead a better life — a *morally* better life. The historical cause of this transformation is royal virtue, and the interdependent nexus linking royal virtue with agricultural and economic prosperity, which in turn begets the morally good life, is as explicit in the *1789 Chronicle* as in any other 'traditional' Southeast Asian text. The rule of a king fructifies the land and thus enhances the opportunities for merit-making.

In reading over this transformation of the kingdom from a kind of Hobbesian state of nature, in which man was set against man, to a state of harmony and utopian fulfilment, one cannot help but recall the legend of the first monarch in Buddhist tradition, Mahasammata or 'the Great Elect', who was invited by a warring and impoverished population to eliminate discord and restore order and prosperity. This legend was common in the Theravada Buddhist world, coming as it did from the *Sutta* section of the Pali Canon, in the 'Book of Genesis' of the *Digha-Nikaya*.³⁵ The legend has been interpreted as a social contract theory of government which went farther than similar references in Sanskrit texts in postulating a contract between a ruler and his subjects.³⁶ It is also helpful to regard the Mahasammata story as a legend which gives to the first king the duty of bringing harmony to the kingdom, and Rama I's historian, in dramatizing this transformation in his *Pali Chronicle* and crediting Rama I for its success, was evoking this legendary first king.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 441.

³⁴ F.H. van Naerssen, 'Some Aspects of the Hindu-Javanese Kraton', *JOSA*, 2, i (1963) p. 19, note 5.

³⁵ T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids (trs.), 'Dialogues of the Buddha, pt. III, ch. XXVII' in T.W. Rhys Davids (ed.), *Sacred Books of the Buddhists* (London, Luzac & Co. for the Pali Text Society, 1971) Vol. IV. See also Ba Han, 'Burmese Cosmogony and Cosmology', *JBRIS*, 48, i (1965) pp. 15-16; Spellman, p. 22; B.G. Gokhale, 'The Early Buddhist View of the State', *JAOS*, 89, iv (1969) p. 733; F. Reynolds, 'The Two Wheels of Dhamma: A Study of Early Buddhism', in B.L. Smith (ed.), *The Two Wheels of Dhamma, Essays on the Theravada Tradition in India and Ceylon* (American Academy of Religion. Studies in Religion, n. 3) (Chambersburg (Penn.), American Academy of Religion, 1972) pp. 18-19.

³⁶ The applicability of the social contract theory to actual historical communities is difficult to determine. See Spellman, pp. 19-25. See also the comments of Mabbet, 'South-East Asian Conceptions', pp. 9-10.

In a sense all kings were 'first' kings, for, if we may allude to the *Mahabharata* to make this point, the king 'is the author of time, not of chronological time which is but an abstraction, but of the time which ripens the actions of men . . .'.³⁷ Nowhere does a king, especially a king who might found a dynasty, better reveal himself as the author of time which ripens the actions of men than when he lays down the rules of society, the law. Early Mon authors in the Southeast Asian Buddhist world, engaged in adapting the Hindu law code to their society, had endowed the legendary first king, Mahasammata, with a hermit-sage who recited from memory the text of the law which he found inscribed on the wall surrounding the world.³⁸ The hermit-sage was, of course, Manu, transformed from the lawgiver of Hindu society to law-transmitter for a Buddhist society, and Rama I, in one of his many acts of 'restoration' and 'renewal', compiled and promulgated a law code in 1805 which began with one of the Mon *dharmaśāstra*. In issuing this law code he gave to his kingdom the law of Manu which governs laymen and promotes their welfare, a law which establishes harmony in the world just as the first king established harmony in the world. The conclusion one can draw from this constellation of evidence is that the turbulence following the fall of Ayudhya provided Rama I, who was trying to fortify and rejuvenate the kingdom, with ample opportunity to tap a deep reservoir of myth concerning the creation of culture and the genesis of the social order, and the 1789 *Chronicle* has historical value for the way it makes connections between the Chakri brothers and this reservoir of myth. Not to read the *Chronicle* with these wider dimensions in mind is to miss its historical value and to fail to do it justice.

This line of thinking may aid us in interpreting the final chapter of the *Chronicle* which relates, *inter alia*, the decline of the religion in 1,000-year intervals leading to the extinction of the Buddha's teaching 5,000 years after his *parinibbana*. At first the power to acquire the degrees of sanctity will disappear, followed by observance of the precepts, knowledge of the scriptures, and the exterior signs of the Buddhist ascetic. Finally, the corporeal relics of the Buddha will be consumed in a holocaust.³⁹ This prophecy of the inevitable retrogression of the religion, which was given its definitive form by the Indian commentator Buddhaghosa, acted to inspire Buddhist monarchs to do everything in their power to retard the process or, at least, to make the most of the stages remaining. People were fortunate to be born in an age when a Buddha had appeared whose message offered a way to escape the endless

³⁷ R. Lingat, 'Time and the Dharma: On Manu I, 85-86', *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 6 (1962) p. 14.

³⁸ *Idem*, *The Classical Law of India* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1973) p. 267.

³⁹ G. Coedes, 'The Twenty-five-hundredth Anniversary of the Buddha', *Diogenes*, 15 (1956) pp. 98-9.

round of deaths and rebirths. The fourteenth century Thai monarch, Lidaiya, was conscious of the prophecy and exhorted his subjects in an inscription of A.D. 1357 to 'make haste to perform meritorious actions [in accordance with] the Buddha's religion while it still survives'.⁴⁰ This sense of urgency may have impelled the same king to compose his 'Three Worlds Cosmology' as the end of the second millennium approached.⁴¹ But what are we to make of the 5,000-year prophecy in the *1789 Chronicle*? In discussing the *Chronicle*, Coedès thought the inclusion of the prophecy added little to the work and bore almost no relationship to its main subject.⁴²

Though it is true that this material adds nothing new to Buddhist history or historiography, perhaps we can understand the inclusion of the prophecy as a cosmological abstraction or recapitulation of the terrible conditions that beset the kingdom after 1767. In the last chapter the *kali-yuga* or dark age is mentioned again, and the description of the terrible conditions is identical to the conditions described in the 'historical' section of chapter 7:

When study of the scriptures declines, when it slips away, there will occur an age of vice and misery (*kali-yuga*) of the unrighteous people. When the king is without *dhamma* the people — the ministers, for example — follow likewise and become without *dhamma* in the same way.⁴³

Further deterioration of society proceeds in a downward spiral. The inability to know and follow *dhamma* results in drought. When lay people are poor they cannot offer the monastic requisites and monks cannot look after their disciples. The passage mentioning the *kali-yuga* immediately precedes the *Chronicle's* description of the disappearance of the knowledge of the scriptures, beginning with the *Abhidhamma* and continuing until even the *Vinaya* is lost. The last vestige of the Buddha's teaching is lost when there is no lay person who remembers a four-line verse of the Buddha's words. At the time Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana compiled his chronicle, the retrogression of the religion had reached its third 1,000-year stage during which the scriptures would gradually disappear, and Rama I in sponsoring the Tripitaka Revision of 1788 was forestalling the inevitable outcome. In other words, the last chapter of the *1789 Chronicle*

⁴⁰ A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, 'The Epigraphy of Mahadharmaraja of Sukhodaya, Epigraphic and Historical Studies No. 11, Part I', *JSS*, 61, i (1973) p. 102. Lidaiya's version of the prophecy is translated on pp. 98-101; see also note 42.

⁴¹ G. Coedès, 'The Traibhumikatha Buddhist Cosmology and Treaty on Ethics', *East and West*, 7, iv (1957) pp. 349-50.

⁴² Coedès, 'Une recension palie', p. 6.

⁴³ *1789 Chronicle*, p. 554.

transposes the events of 1767, a dark age, and places them in relation to the 5,000-year prophecy, a temporal plane which has special meaning in Buddhist time. The *Chronicle* tells how that dark age of 1767 is to be understood, as a hint of the terrible conditions that will occur when the Buddha's teachings expire.

Another way in which the *Chronicle* makes connections between Thai history and the specially charged period in which the Buddha's teachings endure is through the narration of the Buddhist Councils themselves, the sequence of Councils which gives the *Chronicle* its name. Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana reckoned the 1788 Council in Siam as the ninth in a lineage reaching back to the sixth century B.C. when the first Council was called following the Buddha's death. The *Mahavamsa* does not reckon Southeast Asian kings in the line of Buddhist kings who convened Councils, but Southeast Asian Theravada Buddhist courts grafted their Councils on to the broader tradition as they saw fit, feeling themselves a part of the Buddhist world. The Burmese, for example, calculate the Council in King Mindon's reign (1853-1878) as the Fifth and that in the 1950s under U Nu as the Sixth.⁴⁴ Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana places the first three Councils in India, the next four in Sri Lanka, the eighth in the northern Thai state with its capital at Chiangmai in the year A.D. 1483, and the ninth in Bangkok in 1788.⁴⁵ In fashioning this lineage of Councils with Rama I's as the most recent, the author assimilated the history of the Thai kingdoms to South Asian history.

It was not just Rama I's patronage of the Council, the provision of writing materials, and personal consideration for the monks' comfort (the king's brother cooked rice himself for the Pali scholars) that bespoke the king's virtue, but also the fact that he initiated the Council. All the sources agree that the idea for the Council came from the secular side — the king, the court — but at first no one saw the need. Extant texts of the *Tripitaka* had already been copied and distributed to monasteries when a relatively minor official informed the king that the texts were defective or incomplete.⁴⁶ The king then addressed high ranking monks with this news, and when it was confirmed, he convened the Council. This procedure conforms to the tenets of monastic discipline, which

⁴⁴ E.M. Mendelson in J.P. Ferguson (ed.), *Sangha and State in Burma, A Study of Monastic Sectarianism and Leadership* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1975) chs. 2 and 5, *passim*. International recognition of these Councils as orthodox is another matter entirely; see pp. 276-7.

⁴⁵ On the Eighth Council, see *1789 Chronicle*, pp. 340-2. This Council in the north receives only glancing mention in the *Jinakalamali* (Jkm. translation, p. 164), but it is presumed that a leaf from the original MS is missing (p. 140, note 1). Another chronicle which records the history of the north, 'Phongsawadan yonok' in *Prachum phongsawadan* (Bangkok, Khurusapha Press, 1963) Vol. IV, pp. 255-6, dates the Eighth Council in 1477 A.D.

⁴⁶ Chaophraya Thiphakorawong, *Phraratchaphongsawadan krung rattanakosin: ratchakan thi 1* (Bangkok, 1960) p. 183. Hereafter, *Royal Chronicle of the First Reign*.

suggest that a monk should not request anything he requires; instead, a thoughtful lay person must anticipate his needs. At the same time this secular initiative, as recorded in the *Chronicle* and other sources, attributed to Rama I and his court a concern for the health of the religion, a concern which he shared with other great Buddhist kings of the past.

One of these great kings was Asoka, who had convened the Third Council in the third century B.C.⁴⁷ The historicity of this and other Councils is beside the point here; what mattered was the tradition.⁴⁸ For Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana to reckon the 1788 Council in a lineage that included Asoka was to borrow the prestige of that famous king and drape it over Rama I's own achievement. It was to declaim that Rama I was Asoka's equal; it was to intimate equality by associating Rama I with a genealogical line of Buddhist Councils which included Asoka's. Such associations made Indian-Sri Lankan-Thai Buddhist history a single, seamless cloth that covered the entire period from the time of the Buddha to the present day. Moreover, the appropriateness of Asoka's model was taken for granted; the time in which he lived was not remote and alien but immediate and familiar. In this respect, the *1789 Chronicle* regards the distant past no differently from other sources analyzed in this volume: the contemporaneity of the distant past is a hallmark of Southeast Asian historiography.

To come to a last point about the relationship between the *1789 Chronicle* and the historical context which produced it, we might ask how the schisms in the *sangha* during the Taksin-Rama I years are reflected in this document. What interpretation does the author place on these divisions in the *sangha*, the instigation of which is the second most serious infraction of the *Vinaya*, requiring disciplinary action by the Order? Though the *1789 Chronicle* records a dispute in the *sangha* on a ritualistic question of ablution,⁴⁹ it does not mention the schisms that can be documented from other sources. The inattention to these schisms on the part of an author who experienced them first-hand is, at first, daunting, but we must remember the strict conventions of the *Mahavamsa* genre, whose single objective was to glorify the religion and the kings who supported it. To dwell on the disunity in the *sangha* would have detracted from this objective and undermined it. Even so, the relationship between the schisms, the *1789 Chronicle*, and the process of securing and legitimizing the throne for Rama I ultimately proves more interesting than it first appears.

⁴⁷ For Asoka's place in Buddhist history and kingship, see the essays by F. Reynolds, 'The Two Wheels of Dhamma' and B.L. Smith, 'The Ideal Social Order as Portrayed in the Chronicles of Ceylon' in *The Two Wheels of Dhamma*.

⁴⁸ Most scholars agree, for example, that the First Council was not an historical event. See C.S. Prebish, 'A Review of Scholarship on the Buddhist Councils', *JAS*, 33, ii (1974) p. 241.

⁴⁹ *1789 Chronicle*, pp. 449-53.

The first Council in India was convened to deal with one of the disciples who had criticized the Buddha; the second was convened to resolve a dispute over ten disciplinary points; the third was convened by Asoka to purge the *sangha* of non-Buddhist ascetics who had deceitfully been ordained. The consequence of this last Council was the disrobing of 60,000 monks, and it may be at the same time as this Third Council of circa 250 B.C. that Asoka issued his Schism Edict:

No one is to cause dissension in the Order. The Order of monks and nuns has been united, and this unity should last for as long as my sons and great grandsons, and the moon and the sun. Whoever creates a schism in the Order, whether monk or nun, is to be dressed in white garments, and to be put in a place not inhabited by monks or nuns. For it is my wish that the Order should remain united and endure for long.⁵⁰

The fact that the Pali Canon, the authorized version of the schisms for the Theravada School, fails to include the Third Council demonstrates the sensitivity to the schisms in the historical record.⁵¹ The circumstances of the convening of this Third Council, and the others as well, suggest that, apart from the textual editing and copying needs that ostensibly brought the monks together in 1788, the Bangkok Council had a sociological dimension somewhat concealed in Vimaladhamma/Vanaratana's telling of it. Schism was to Buddhism what heresy was to Christianity; there was no greater threat to the monkhood than factions in the *sangha*, and the schisms of the years 1767 to 1788 were, as indicated earlier in this essay, extremely contentious and disruptive. In a sense, the editing and copying accomplished in the 1788 Council were surface events, and we must look beneath them to discover the more complex significance of the Council. In Burma the programme of textual comparison undertaken during U Nu's Sixth Council 'was more ritual than real',⁵² and while this judgement may not quite apply in the Thai case, it is true that Rama I shared with U Nu, and with Mindon too, an abiding concern for *sangha* unity.

The French scholar André Bareau has pointed out that the Pali word translated as 'council' is composed of two terms, 'to chant (*giti*) together (*sam*)'. An accurate rendering of the Pali terms is closer to the French word *concert* — concord, harmony, unanimity — than to 'council'.⁵³ The Councils reaffirmed

⁵⁰ Romila Thapar, *Asoka and the Decline of the Mauryas* (London, O.U.P., 1961) p. 262. This is a conflation of the various versions of the edict.

⁵¹ A.K. Warder, 'The Pali Canon and its Commentaries as an Historical Record' in *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, p. 48.

⁵² Mendelson, p. 279.

⁵³ A. Bareau, *Les premiers conciles bouddhiques* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1955) p. 134.

the unity of the *sangha* which was based on the unity of, and relative agreement on, the Doctrine. The Councils were, in fact, 'the only way of assuring this unity, since the Community lacked any central authority charged with assuming this function'.⁵⁴ Certainly, a Thai prince-patriarch of more recent times understood the sociological function of the Councils in this way, as a means of contending with dissident groups in the *sangha* and preserving unity.⁵⁵

It would seem, then, that the Councils sought to resolve conflict in the *sangha* and to institutionalize it. Rama I was no less stern in demoting those monks who had accepted Taksin's claims to exalted spiritual status than Asoka had been in disrobing 60,000 ascetics, but the most distinguished of the monks loyal to Taksin was ultimately allowed to participate as head of one of the four divisions.⁵⁶ His participation thus institutionalized a schism that had persisted for some years by bringing into the fold a senior monk whose dissidence obstructed Rama I's efforts at reunification.

Similarly, the northern Thai king in the fifteenth century who had convened the Eighth Council ruled at a time when more than one monastic order had established itself. The Sinhalese order, led by monks who had travelled to Sri Lanka for reordination, was expanding, and the king brought a degree of unity by encouraging the reordination of monks in the orthodox Sinhalese manner.⁵⁷ A second comparison with the two Burmese Councils in the past 100 years is also instructive. Both Mindon and U Nu struggled with sectarian controversy and attempted to unify the *sangha* through the sponsorship of Councils.⁵⁸ In this context, the Sixth Council in Burma has been termed 'a disciplinary action' on the part of the Nu government.⁵⁹ Seen in this light, the 1788 Council in Thailand and the 1789 *Chronicle* that commemorates it become a declaration that the schism has been healed, that conflict has been resolved.

In the years between his accession in 1782 and the Council in 1788 Rama I was still in the process of establishing his claim to the throne. Indeed, he was not formally crowned until 1785, three years after his accession. A claim to the throne such as his needed to be substantiated by more than brute force and military victory. Like the ancient Khmer Kings Jayavarman II and Jayavarman IV who had little hereditary right to the throne and who spent some years trying to prove that right before performing the *Devaraja* ceremony that formally consecrated their reigns, Rama I spent the early years of his reign

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ Prince-patriarch Vajiranavavarorasa (1860-1921), 'Ruang nikai' in *Phraniphon tang ruang* (Bangkok, Mahamakut Ratchawitthayalai, 1971) pp. 5-33.

⁵⁶ *Royal Chronicle of the First Reign*, p. 193.

⁵⁷ Jkm. translation, pp. 133-8.

⁵⁸ Mendelson, pp. 294, 297.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 355.

reaffirming traditional modes of Thai government promoting a sense of normality in social relations and demonstrating political wisdom. The legitimizing process, which really continued throughout the reign, was especially critical in the first six years until the 1788 Council; only after this date do the major historical, legal, and literary textual revisions appear.

The discord in the *sangha* was symptomatic of the turmoil after the fall of Ayudhya, and if Rama I's state was to last, this problem had to be overcome. Between his accession in 1782 and his Brahmanical coronation in 1785 Rama I decreed no fewer than seven of his ten 'laws' on the *sangha*, most of them covering schism and indiscipline.⁶⁰ The 1788 Council and the 1789 *Chronicle* were tacit declarations that the schism, if not eliminated, was at least under control, and this attainment was crucial to buttressing Rama I's kingship. A divided *sangha* meant a divided people, an ungovernable people, for the monkhood 'provided a tight binding between the government and the populace'.⁶¹ And could it not be that the 1789 *Chronicle*, written by a high ranking monk who had taken a stand in the schism and had been honoured for his orthodoxy by his new patron, was an expression of the *sangha*'s confidence in the new king? The 1788 Council and the writing of its history crowned the legitimizing process in the first six years of the reign, especially as far as the *sangha* was concerned. In this sense, the 1789 *Chronicle* helped to make history as well as record it.

In the *Chronicle* the author's interest was in giving Rama I's Council of 1788 a history, and this Council's history was an auspicious sign for the *sangha* that Rama I had found ways to resolve its conflicts and that his reign would endure. What was at stake was the stability of the relationship between monarch and *sangha*, and it was this stable relationship that the king and the monks closest to him sought to attain. The key to Rama I's success would be his understanding from history that a prosperous, unified monkhood signified a prosperous, unified kingdom. Such a lesson from history, a lesson derived from all the works in this Buddhist historiographical tradition, was subsumed under a larger purpose in remembering the past, namely, that history was a means of understanding the ultimate terms of man's existence, his place on earth, and what was in store for him in the after-life.⁶²

⁶⁰ These laws cited cases of indiscipline and then exhorted both monks and lay people to help the *sangha* maintain a high ascetic standard. See 'Kot phrasong' in R. Lingat (ed.), *Kotmai tra sam duang* (Bangkok, Khurusapha Press, 1962) Vol. IV, pp. 164-228.

⁶¹ Vajiranavavarorasa, 'Phraprawat trat lao' in Damrong Rajanubhab, et al., *Phraratchaprawat ratchakan thi 5 kon sawoei rat* (Bangkok, 1961) p. 224.

⁶² Wang Gungwu, *The Use of History* (Papers in International Studies, Southeast Asia Series no. 4) (Athens (Ohio), Ohio University Center for International Studies, 1968) p. 2.

This episode in Thai history resonates with similar situations elsewhere in Southeast Asia, when a time of stress or urgency called forth reflection on the past. The *1789 Chronicle*, like the chronicle of the Vietnamese historian Le Van Huu,⁶³ for example, was a history for an occasion, and both the Thai and Vietnamese authors found a larger historiographical tradition — Buddhist or Chinese, as the case may be — utterly appropriate and *necessary* for their urgent concerns. The fusion of this larger historiographical tradition with an indigenous Southeast Asian historical continuum was so natural as to make a distinction between the two indiscernible.

⁶³ See O.W. Wolters' article in this volume.

ISLAMIC THOUGHT AND MALAY TRADITION:
The Writings of Raja Ali Haji of Riau (ca. 1809—ca. 1870)*

Barbara Watson Andaya
Virginia Matheson

In the first decades of the nineteenth century, when the Dutch colonial administration in Batavia began to show an active interest in collecting Malay manuscripts and compiling reliable information about the Malay language, the Riau-Lingga archipelago became a principal focus of attention. It was felt that only here, in the heart of the old Johor kingdom, was 'pure', 'high' Malay still spoken and the traditional linguistic and literary traditions preserved.¹ As Elisa Netscher, a Dutch official and historian who later became resident of Riau, remarked in 1858, 'Despite the feeling that Malay literature in Riau has declined [i.e. from former days] there are still many industrious students and men of letters . . . who are held in honour.'² While the works produced in Riau-Lingga during this period are deeply rooted in the traditions of Malay and Islamic literature, they also demonstrate a concerted effort to record and understand the past in accordance with specific demands of the contemporary situation. Nowhere is this better demonstrated than in the writings of Raja Ali Haji ibni Raja Ahmad (ca. 1809—ca. 1870).³

Raja Ali Haji was above all a product of his age, deeply concerned with the implications of the social and political changes experienced by the Malay world during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. By the time he was fifteen, the Dutch residency of Riau⁴ was all that remained of the great kingdom of Johor, which had once claimed dependencies from the Malay Peninsula across to Sumatra. In little over a hundred years it had experienced the trauma of regicide, compounded by the divisions and internal dissensions accompanying the establishment of a new dynasty and a Minangkabau invasion that resulted

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¹ A.H. Hill (tr.), *Hikayat Abdullah* (Kuala Lumpur, 1970) pp. 33-4; J.L. Swellengrebel, *In Leijdeckers Voetspoor* (VKI, no. 67) ('s-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1974) pp. 185-91; S.A. Buddingh, *Neerlands Oost Indie* (Rotterdam M. Wijt, 1859-61) Vol. III, p. 19. Interest in Riau's literary and linguistic traditions has recently revived. See U.U. Hamidy, 'Kitab-Kitab yang telah dikarang oleh Sastrawan dan Penulis Riau', *Majallah Ilmu-Ilmu Sastra Indonesia*, 6, i (August 1975) pp. 50-5.

² E. Netscher, 'Raadgeving, Maleische Gedichte van Raja Ali, Onderkoning van Riouw', *TBG*, 7 (1858) I-II, p. 67.

³ See bibliographical appendix.

⁴ This included the Riau and Lingga archipelagos, areas on Sumatra's east coast and the Siantan and Anambas groups.

in the flight of the reigning sultan.⁵ He was only restored with the assistance of a mercenary Bugis force, which ousted the Minangkabau. In return, the sultan granted the Bugis leader the office of Yangdipertuan Muda (assistant to the sultan) to be retained by his descendants in perpetuity.⁶ However, the resulting arrangement of a dual administration headed by a Malay Sultan and a Bugis Yamtuan Muda, each supported by his own officials, was not accepted by the Malay nobles, many of whom were over-ruled by their Bugis counterparts. Despite repeated oaths of loyalty between the two sides, their relationship was never stable, and the Malays constantly sought ways to rid Riau of its former protectors.⁷ The opportunities for friction were only partly eased at the end of the eighteenth century when Sultan Mahmud, a Malay ruler, left Riau to the Bugis and established his own court to the south, on the island of Lingga.

A succession dispute in 1812, when Bugis and Malay factions supported different candidates for the Lingga sultanate, renewed the old tensions. The conflict between the two groups culminated in 1819 when Raffles installed one claimant as Sultan of Singapore, while the Dutch later responded by installing the other as Sultan of Lingga.⁸

European involvement in this dynastic conflict reflected the changing political and economic realities in the Malay archipelago. By sanctifying the creation of two separate spheres of influence, the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824 divided the Malay world and split the old Johor kingdom in half, parting 'brother from brother and friend from friend'.⁹ The eclipse of Dutch power in the peninsula area heralded the passing of an age. In the words of Munshi Abdullah, 'the old order is destroyed, a new world is created and all around us is change'.¹⁰ Riau's economy, already shaken by years of internal strife, was to suffer further as Singapore developed.¹¹ To step off a boat at the Dutch administrative town of Tanjung Pinang was like entering a new world, governed by totally different standards.¹² Aloof from the cosmopolitan bustle of Singapore, the traditional

⁵ For a discussion of this period in Johor history, see L.Y. Andaya, *The Kingdom of Johor, 1641-1728* (Kuala Lumpur and London, O.U.P., 1975), chs. VII-X.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 293-7.

⁷ See C.H. Wake, 'Nineteenth Century Johore: Ruler and Realm in Transition' (Ph.D. thesis, The Australian National University, 1966) pp. 18-20; E. Netscher, *De Nederlanders in Djohor en Siak* (Batavia, Bruining and Wijt, 1870) pp. 225-45; C.A. Trocki, 'The Temenggongs of Johor, 1784-1885' (Ph.D. thesis, Cornell, 1975) pp. 47-57.

⁸ For a summary of events surrounding this episode, see Wake, pp. 21-33.

⁹ Notes and Queries No. 4, issued with *JSBRAS*, 17 (June 1886) pp. 111-13.

¹⁰ *Hikayat Abdullah*, pp. 63, 162.

¹¹ For figures showing the decline of Riau's trade in relation to Singapore, see 'Vrijhaven van Riouw', *TBG*, 3 (1857) pp. 48-57.

¹² G.F. de Bruijn Kops, 'Sketch of the Rhio-Lingga Archipelago', *JIAEA*, 9 (1855) pp. 97-8; J.T. Thomson, 'A Glance at Rhio', *JIAEA*, 1 (1847) p. 69.

adat and *agama* (custom and religion) continued, undisturbed by the colonial presence. While Singapore's ruling elite became increasingly entranced with the new life-style introduced by the English, Riau remained the guardian of the old ways, the protector of what was seen as the Malay heritage. Here the reformist Islam of the early nineteenth century flourished, encouraged by the piety of both the Malay Sultan and the Bugis Yamtuan Muda.¹³ *Tarikat*, mystical brotherhoods under the guidance of a teacher or *syekh* blossomed, but accretions which ran counter to the purity of medieval Islam were strictly forbidden. In the eyes of most Malays, Riau retained its reputation as a place where the true religion flourished.¹⁴

Nonetheless, Raja Ali Haji and his contemporaries realized that the values and customs they espoused and promoted were now endangered by outside forces over which they had no control. It was against this background, this sense of a threatened world, that the poetry and prose works mentioned by Netscher were produced.¹⁵ Yet, despite Johor's long standing literary tradition, it is remarkable that the bulk of the literature coming from Riau during this period was written or sponsored not by the Malay Sultan and court on Lingga, but by members of the Bugis Yamtuan Muda family and those closely associated with it.

The majority of Bugis princes in Riau could trace their line directly from the legendary Raja Haji (died 1784), fourth Yamtuan Muda, who even in his own lifetime had been regarded as a *keramat hidup* (a living saint).¹⁶ They formed a tightly knit community, most of whom lived on the island of Penyengat, just off Tanjung Pinang. Fiercely conscious of their descent and blood relationship, they nevertheless considered themselves an integral and established part of Malay society and the wider Islamic community. Many had made the pilgrimage to Mecca and were well aware of political developments in the archipelago and the world beyond.¹⁷ It was Penyengat, the seat of the Yamtuan Muda, which provided Riau with its religious and secular leadership, and it was Penyengat, rather than the sultan's residence on Lingga, which was the real heart of the kingdom.

There are several possible explanations as to why this community was almost solely responsible for what might be seen as a literary renaissance in Riau in the first half of the nineteenth century. Undoubtedly many were

¹³ See C. van Angelbeck, 'Korte Schets van het Eiland Lingga and deszelfs Bewoners', *VBG*, 11 (1826) pp. 30, 36.

¹⁴ In the 19th century there was a steady stream of religious teachers attracted to Riau. See Raja Ali Haji, *Tuhfat al-Nafis* (Singapore, 1965) pp. 340, 342, 347, 349-50, 364.

¹⁵ Netscher, 'Raadgeving', p. 67.

¹⁶ P.C. Hoyne van Papendrecht, 'Some Old Private Letters from the Cape, Batavia, and Malacca (1778-1788)', *JMBRAS*, 3, i (1924) p. 22.

¹⁷ Raja Ali Haji, for example, followed the progress of the Crimean War with interest. E. Netscher, *Memorie van Overgave, 1870* (Koninklijk Instituut, Handschrift 420) fol. 12.

encouraged by the interest of various Dutch officials who were collecting manuscripts for personal reasons or because of specific instructions from Batavia. A number of texts now preserved in Jakarta and Leiden, for example, were copied in the office of C.P.J. Elout during his years as Resident of Riau (1826-1830).¹⁸ In his official capacity as bible translator, H.C. Klinkert acquired over ninety manuscripts during his two and a half years stay in Riau,¹⁹ and H.T. von de Wall personally sponsored the publication of literary efforts by members of the Riau elite who worked with him on the compilation of a dictionary.²⁰ The Resident Elisa Netscher (1861-1870) assiduously collected, transcribed, and translated a number of works which were published in some of the leading Dutch journals.

It also appears that for the Penyengat Bugis writing had now become an acceptable royal occupation. In traditional Malay courts chronicles and poetry may have been commissioned and even supervised by the ruler, a prince, or powerful noble, but the actual composition was generally entrusted to a man skilled in the art of composing, a *pengarang*. Although relatively few members of Malay royal families were burdened with responsibilities of government, only rarely were *anak raja*²¹ actually engaged in literary activities. In contrast, the Penyengat community had not only the leisure and means, but apparently the desire, to write. A number tried their hand at composing and translating well known stories and poems, sometimes depicting court events in allegorical terms for princely entertainment.²² Others were involved in the translation of religious works, didactic texts produced in a climate of Islamic reformism, which were intended to point the way to a closer association between man and God.²³ The Yamtuan Muda family was also particularly interested in historical subjects, possibly reflecting the quest for identity and absorption with the past of a dynasty which sensed that its great age had gone. Finally, one should remember

¹⁸ For example, the *Aturan Setia Bugis Dengan Melayu*, Leiden University Library Codex Orientalis (hereafter, Leiden Cod. Or.) 1724.

¹⁹ Swellengrebel, p. 188.

²⁰ For example, Haji Ibrahim, *Cakap-Cakap Rampai-Rampai Bahasa Melayu Djohor* (first published in Batavia in 1868 and reprinted in 1875); also, H. von de Wall, 'Kitab Perkeboenan Djoeroetoelis', *TBG*, 19, i (1870) p. 571.

²¹ Sons and daughters of princes.

²² For example, the *Syair Kumbang Mengindera* (Klinkert 190, Leiden University Library), attributed to Raja Sapiah, a daughter of Raja Ali Haji; the *Syair Saudagar Bodoh* (Klinkert 104, Leiden University Library), by another daughter, Raja Kalzum; and the *Syair Burung* by Raja Ali Haji's son, Raja Hassan. See H. Overbeck, 'Malay Animal and Flower Shaers', *JMBRAS*, 7, ii (1934) pp. 108-48.

²³ See R.O. Winstedt, *A History of Classical Malay Literature* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1969) p. 153; and R.L. Archer, 'Muhammadan Mysticism in Sumatra', *JMBRAS*, 15, ii (1937) pp. 21-49.

that in Bugis society generally there is a deep-rooted concern that 'old princes will be forgotten by posterity'²⁴ and the Bugis heritage on Penyengat was still strongly felt.²⁵ Two of the most famous histories produced there in the nineteenth century stress that these accounts were intended for the benefit of future generations.²⁶

One of the more influential personalities within the Penyengat group was Raja Ahmad, son of the famed Bugis hero Raja Haji, and brother of Raja Ja'afar, Yamtuan Muda from 1805 to 1831. Born in 1773, Raja Ahmad witnessed the changes in the Malay court after 1784 and, as an official in the Riau court, was intimately involved with many of the most decisive events during this period. Obviously a man of some ability, he led a varied and interesting life. He was the first prince from Riau to perform the *haj*, and in 1823 he led a mission to the Governor-General in Batavia for trade and study.²⁷ He was keenly interested in the historical past, and one of his poems (*Sya'ir Perang Johor*) describes the wars between Johor and Aceh in the seventeenth century, Johor's golden age.²⁸ It is now felt that it was Raja Ahmad who first conceived a great epic which would relate the history of the Bugis in the Malay world and their relationship with Malay kings.²⁹

Pioneer though he was, Raja Ahmad's life and achievements were overshadowed by those of his famous son, Raja Ali Haji, born about 1809. From his youth, Raja Ali Haji, the eldest surviving son, appeared favoured. He accompanied his father on many expeditions such as the mission to Batavia, various trading voyages, and the *haj* itself. Before he was twenty, Raja Ali Haji had already seen much of the world, and within a few years he had been entrusted with official duties of some responsibility. At the age of thirty-two he was acting as joint regent with his cousin Raja Ali ibni Raja Ja'afar, and ruling Lingga for the young Sultan Mahmud (r. 1832-1857). Even as a young man, Raja Ali Haji was highly regarded as a religious scholar, who actively recruited Islamic teachers for Riau and was consulted on points of doctrine by members of the royal family. When his cousin, Raja Ali ibni Raja Ja'afar, became Yamtuan Muda in 1845, Raja Ali Haji was appointed his religious

²⁴ J. Noorduyn, 'Some Aspects of Buginese Historiography' in D.G.E. Hall (ed.), *Historians of Southeast Asia* (London, O.U.P., 1961) p. 34; and A.A. Cense, 'Old Buginese and Macassarese Diaries', *BKI*, 122 (1966) p. 420. For the strong historical tradition of the Makassarese, see the article by L.Y. Andaya in this volume.

²⁵ See A.F. von de Wall, 'Beknopte Geschiedenis van het Vorstenhuis en de Rijksinstellingen van Lingga en Rijau', *TBB*, 6 (1892) p. 323; Thomson, p. 71; and L. Andaya, p. 295.

²⁶ *Tuhfat*, p. 379; Raja Ali Haji, *Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis* (Johor, 1956) p. 1.

²⁷ For a fuller account of Raja Ahmad's life, see V. Matheson, 'Tuhfat al-Nafis (The Precious Gift). A Nineteenth Century Malay History Critically Examined' (Ph.D. thesis, Monash, 1973) pp. 1120-8.

²⁸ Leiden Cod. Or. 1761.

²⁹ For a discussion of this, see Matheson, pp. 12-33.

advisor and emerged as a prominent member of the Nakshabandiyya *tarikat*, headed by the Yamtuan Muda's brother.³⁰ Both these men, Raja Ali Haji's intimates, were versed in religious law and aware of Johor's history,³¹ typifying the elite of Penyengat society. Raja Ali Haji was thus not a lone figure, but one of a group of men who, by contemporary Malay standards, could be regarded as intellectuals.

As spokesman for this group, the prestige of Raja Ali Haji among the Malay speaking population of the area was high, and he was considered 'a scholar of great renown among his countrymen'.³² He was probably the first of the literary circle in Riau to have his work appear in print, when the 'Sya'ir Sultan Abdul Muluk' was published in the *TNI* in 1847.³³ Six years afterwards, under the sponsorship of Elisa Netscher, other poems by Raja Ali Haji appeared in the journal of the Bataviaasch Genootschap.³⁴ When Yamtuan Muda Ali decided that a grammar of the Malay language was needed, his cousin was the obvious choice for compiler. The text, entitled the *Bustan al-Katibin* (The Garden of Writers) was lithographed in 1857 and used with some success in Johor and Singapore schools. Somewhat later, Raja Ali Haji commenced a dictionary of Malay usage, the *Kitab Pengetahuan Bahasa* (Knowledge of Language),³⁵ designed to guide those interested in improving their understanding of language, religion and correct behaviour. Unfortunately, this work was never completed,³⁶ but it stands as evidence of Raja Ali Haji's desire to help his fellow men who wished to lead a righteous life and act according to Malay tradition. Other didactic texts, like the *Thamarat al-Mahammah* (The Benefits of Religious Duties)³⁷ and the *Intizam Waza'if al-Malik* (Systematic Arrangement of the Duties of the Ruler),³⁸ written as a memorial volume on the death of Yamtuan Muda Ali in 1857, are directed specifically at the Riau-Lingga court, containing advice on the conduct of kings and rules for government.

³⁰ *Tuhfat*, p. 350. For information on the Nakshabandiyya *tarikat*, see J. Spencer Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1971) p. 130.

³¹ Netscher acknowledged that he was indebted for much of his information concerning genealogical tables and royal descent to 'the present Raja Muda Ali and in particular to his well-informed brother, Raja Abdullah'. Netscher, 'Beschrijving', p. 149.

³² E. Netscher, 'De Twaalf Spreukgedichten', *TBG*, 2 (1853) p. 13.

³³ P.P. Roorda van Eysinga, 'Abdoel Moeloek, Koning van Barbarije', *TNI*, 9, iv (1847) pp. 285-6. See bibliographical appendix.

³⁴ Netscher, 'De Twaalf Spreukgedichten'.

³⁵ See bibliographical appendix for full title.

³⁶ Presumably because of Raja Ali Haji's death.

³⁷ Completed in March 1859 and lithographed in Lingga in 1886-87. See bibliographical appendix for full title.

³⁸ See bibliographical appendix under *Mukaddimah fi intizam*. Other works attributed to Raja Ali Haji which have recently come to light are listed by Hamidy, pp. 51-2.

Knowledgeable in religion, genealogy, history, literature, and law, Raja Ali Haji's reputation was widespread.³⁹ By 1870 his political influence had spanned nearly four decades and the Dutch themselves acknowledged his leadership of the Penyengat circle. But while Malays respected Raja Ali Haji as a pious Muslim and as an expert on Malay *adat*, the Dutch saw him as a threat to their control of the Riau administration. Resident Netscher, in his retiring report, described Raja Ali Haji as a 'thoroughly fanatic scholar, who would quite willingly see the entire elimination of Christians and Christendom'. Feeling his Bugis descent intensely and bitterly opposed to any changes in traditional Malay custom, Raja Ali Haji was antagonistic to the Dutch presence and 'no friend of the Europeans'.⁴⁰

Though phrased in unsympathetic terms, Netscher's remarks reveal something of the concerns which prompted Raja Ali Haji's writing, and the significance of his efforts to record the past. As a Malay of Bugis descent, Raja Ali Haji could not help but be aware that the entrenched position of his family in the administration of Riau-Lingga still aroused some resentment. The bitter quarrels between Malays and Bugis during the previous hundred years had been chronicled in many of the manuscripts in the royal archives and were not easily forgotten. As a close relative of the Yamtuan Muda, and the acknowledged authority on scholarly matters, Raja Ali Haji had access to these texts, which he felt provided him with a key to understanding the past.⁴¹ He therefore set himself the task of compiling a history of Bugis involvement in the Malay world, particularly Johor, explaining the reasons behind former conflicts and, by analogy, the lessons these held for the present generations.

The work which resulted was the well-known *Tuhfat al-Nafis* (The Precious Gift), apparently a joint effort, commenced by Raja Ahmad but edited and enlarged by his son.⁴² Completed by the late 1860s, the *Tuhfat* shares much material with an earlier history compiled by Raja Ali Haji, the *Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis*. Both accounts describe the adventures of the 'Five Bugis Brothers', ancestors of the nineteenth century Penyengat princes, after they

³⁹ In 1868 when Temenggong Abu Bakar of Johor wished to assume a grander title, he despatched envoys to Penyengat to consult Raja Ali Haji on a suitable choice. R.O. Winstedt, 'A History of Johore', *JMBRAS*, 10, iii (1932) pp. 108-9.

⁴⁰ Netscher, *Memorie*, fol. 12-14.

⁴¹ Much of Raja Ali Haji's work seems to have been inspired by the reading of another text. He thought it his duty to make existing material available to a wider audience. See, for example, his explanation of how he came to write the *Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis*, pp. 1-2. See also Mohd. Khalid Saidin, 'Naskah² Lama Mengenai Sejarah Negeri Johor', *Dewan Bahasa*, 15, viii (1971) p. 341. For a discussion of Raja Ali Haji's use of source mss. in the *Tuhfat*, see Matheson, 'The Tuhfat al-Nafis: Structure and Sources', *BKI*, 128, iii (1971) pp. 379-90.

⁴² Raja Ahmad probably finished his draft of the *Tuhfat* in 1866, while Raja Ali Haji compiled the *Silsilah* in 1865. See bibliographical appendix.

left their homeland and migrated to the Malay world. The *Silsilah*, however, is somewhat shorter, ending with a poem recounting a battle between Bugis and Minangkabau forces in 1737, while the *Tuhfat* continues the narrative until 1864 when Temenggong Abu Bakar was made Maharaja of Johor.⁴³

These two works have both proved valuable sources of information for the history of Sumatra, Kalimantan, and the Malay peninsula, and the *Tuhfat*'s detailed description of events spanning nearly two centuries is impressive. As recent studies have demonstrated,⁴⁴ a principal theme is the justification and legitimization of Bugis intervention in the Malay world, yet the very dominance of this theme has obscured other elements present in the text. When the *Tuhfat* is considered in conjunction with Raja Ali Haji's previous didactic works, it becomes apparent that he was not only concerned with the deeds of his Bugis forbears. He was also a Malay intent on preserving the old traditions and a devout Muslim anxious about the condition of the Islamic community. His view of the past, therefore, was not directed simply by a desire to glorify his ancestors or to justify the role they had played in Malay history. On one level the *Tuhfat* is indeed an account, as seen through Raja Ali Haji's eyes, of the association between his Bugis forbears and Malay kings; on a deeper level, however, it is an effort to express his views on society as they had been put forward in earlier writings such as the *Thamarat al-Mahammah* and the *Intizam Waza'if al-Malik*. These works provide the key to understanding Raja Ali Haji's presentation of history, and the influence of his Muslim ideals is clear when one reads his theoretical teaching texts and identifies the same themes in the *Tuhfat*. Completed towards the end of Raja Ali Haji's life, the *Tuhfat* is the culmination of years of experience, scholarship, and examination of the motivations of men and their relationship with God.

Raja Ali Haji's perception of the past cannot be divorced from the development of his religious thinking, which in turn was fundamentally influenced by the writings of Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, the great Persian theologian who died in A.D. 1111. At the end of the eighteenth century al-Ghazali's major work, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (The Revitalisation of the Religious Sciences), had been re-introduced to the Islamic world and the interest thus aroused continued throughout the period of the Wahabi revival.⁴⁵ Raja Ali Haji's admiration of al-Ghazali is attested by the frequency with which he refers to the

⁴³ *Tuhfat*, p. 379.

⁴⁴ L. Andaya, p. 8; Matheson, 'Structure and Sources', pp. 388-90.

⁴⁵ H.A.R. Gibb, *Modern Trends in Islam* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947) p. 32. Early references to al-Ghazali in the Indonesian world are in the Raffles 18 ms. of C.C. Brown (tr.), 'Sejarah Melayu', *JMBRAS*, 25, ii & iii (1952) p. 180; and G.W.J. Drewes (ed. & tr.), *The Admonitions of Seh Bari* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1969) pp. 39, 75ff. The *Ihya'* had become even more accessible to Malays through translations from the Arabic by Abd al-Samad of Palembang (1789) and Daud ibn Abdullah ibn Idris of Patani (1824). See Winstedt, *History of Classical Malay Literature*, pp. 152-3.

Ihya', often recommending specific passages for further reading.⁴⁶ His exegesis on the nature of government, the *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, bears a close resemblance to al-Ghazali's *Nasihat al-Muluk* (Counsel for Kings),⁴⁷ the famous treatise on Islamic statecraft. Both works reflect the view that the function of the state, and the principal duty of society, is to provide a climate conducive to proper observance of religion, so that every man can fulfil his spiritual obligations and prepare himself for the Day of Judgment. For this reason God has appointed kings, who are to set an example of righteous behaviour and assist men in their preparations for the world to come. Rulers have a special responsibility in the maintenance of religion, for they, above all others, have been granted knowledge and the capacity to use it. Able to differentiate between right and wrong, it is they who set the standards for society's moral conduct.⁴⁸

In the *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, Raja Ali Haji goes on to apply this ideal conception of kingship to practical politics. A bad king, he writes, is identified by his arrogance, jealousy, malice, greed, his extravagance, indifference towards administrative matters, deceit, vindictive sense of humour, and procrastination.⁴⁹ In his kingdom there is no money to attract religious scholars, the schools are not maintained, and education suffers. His subjects are ignorant, badly behaved, and amoral; under these conditions, thieves, robbers and pirates abound.⁵⁰ A good ruler, on the other hand, abstains from worldly activities such as the drinking of arrack, gambling, and cock-fighting, and devotes his attention to the building of mosques, hostels for religious travellers, bridges, roads, towns, houses, canals, police stations.⁵¹ When envy, malice and greed threaten the harmony of the kingdom, this pious king restores peace by ordering prompt investigation of rumours and by enforcing laws to prevent quarrels.⁵² The well-being of the realm thus reflects the virtue of the ruler, for he alone has the power to create an ideal spiritual state and the conditions favourable for material prosperity. Under the rule of a perfect prince the country also becomes perfect.⁵³

⁴⁶ For example, *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, pp. 41, 45; and *Kitab*, pp. 42, 44, 108-9, 257, 285, 324, 384, 395, 457. Al-Ghazali's discussion of the watchfulness necessary over the body is summarized in the *Kitab*, pp. 108-9. See also W.M. Watt, *The Faith and Practice of al-Ghazali* (Ethical and religious classics of East and West, no. 8) (London, G. Allen and Unwin, 1963) pp. 131-41; *Tuhfat*, pp. 316, 336.

⁴⁷ F.R.C. Bagley (tr.), *Ghazali's Book of Council for Kings (Nasihat al-Muluk)* (London, O.U.P., 1964).

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. xi, xliii, 46; *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, pp. 58-9, 69; Ph.S. van Ronkel, 'De Maleische Schriftleer en Spraakkunst', *TBG*, 44 (1901) pp. 518-20; *Kitab*, p. 285.

⁴⁹ *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, pp. 49-70.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-9.

⁵¹ *Kitab*, pp. 42-3.

⁵² *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, pp. 55-6; *Intizam Waza'if al-Malik*, p. 15.

⁵³ The qualities of the ideal ruler became an established theme in Islamic writing on statecraft. See J.A. Williams, *Themes of Islamic Civilization* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971) pp. 59-129.

The *Tuhfat al-Nafis* develops this argument further for Malays by illustrations drawn from their own history. In his discussion of the eighteenth century, Raja Ali Haji shows that on several occasions Johor reached the condition of harmony and well-being which typifies the ideal kingdom. Within the text the perfect ruler is clearly identifiable. Under the great princes of Johor, leaders like Daeng Kemboja and Raja Haji, government is conducted according to God's law and Islam flourishes. Wealth naturally flows to such a country; the harbour of Riau is filled with ships from Bengal, China, Sri Lanka, and Thailand, and the people prosper. In such a halcyon state there is no internal strife and both Malays and Bugis live in peace.⁵⁴

Raja Ali Haji was then faced with the problem of explaining how, in this situation, conflict between Malays and Bugis developed, for according to Islamic belief no disruptive forces disturb the tranquillity of the ideal state. Some orthodox Muslims might have argued that the dissension in eighteenth century Riau was brought about simply by *takdir*, God's will, against which man was powerless to act. This explanation was frequently found in Malay court literature, which traditionally saw catastrophe and happiness alike as directed by the decree of God. But although orthodox Islam generally accepted the concept of predestination, the question of man's responsibility, and thus his participation in the making of history, had been debated by Muslim theologians since the eighth century A.D.⁵⁵ No resolution was possible because the Qur'an itself contains a number of ambiguous passages, so that advocates of predestination as well as those of free will could claim a scriptural basis for their views.⁵⁶

Perhaps the revivalist movements which swept through Islam in the nineteenth century, placing greater emphasis on the importance of personal effort in religious matters, modified the implicit acceptance of *takdir*, at least among thinking Muslims. Raja Ali Haji's own writing stressed the individual obligations involved in the acquisition of knowledge,⁵⁷ and in the *Tuhfat al-Nafis* the theme of human responsibility permeates the entire text. The will of Allah, placing limits on the personal freedom of man, directs the line of history, but the factors which shape specific episodes and determine the intricacies of man's relationships with his fellows are human. *Takdir* is only rarely invoked in the *Tuhfat*, and is then used to explain an otherwise inexplicable or tragic event, such as the death of Raja Haji in battle against the Dutch in 1784. According to the *Tuhfat*, Allah in his wisdom brought this about and

⁵⁴ *Tuhfat*, pp. 36, 97, 130, 142, 157, 188.

⁵⁵ M.S. Seale, *Muslim Theology* (London, Luzac, 1964) pp. 16-36; W.M. Watt, *What is Islam?* (London, Longmans, 1968) pp. 22-47; *idem*, *The Formative Period of Islamic Thought* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1973) pp. 82-118; Williams, pp. 174-8.

⁵⁶ A.J. Wensinck, *The Muslim Creed* (Cambridge, F. Cass, 1965) p. 51; see also Watt, *What is Islam?*, p. 40 and *The Formative Period*, p. 93.

⁵⁷ van Ronkel, p. 518.

caused the *jihad* or holy war to fail, in order to demonstrate 'the cruelties of this ephemeral world', to show that its pleasures are short-lived, and to remind His servants that their thoughts should be fixed not on this life but on that to come.⁵⁸ Raja Haji himself, reconciled to death, is received into divine grace and becomes a martyr in God's cause.⁵⁹

But while it is *takdir* which determines the allotted span of a man's life, decides the fate of a battle, or whether a ship shall reach port in safety,⁶⁰ an underlying assumption of the *Tuhfat* is that human failings and disavowal of God's law are the basic cause behind the tribulations and conflicts which beset society. In the *Kitab Pengetahuan Bahasa*, Raja Ali Haji explained that this indifference to Allah first began when He ordered all the angels to bow to Adam and one, Iblis (Satan), refused. Because of this arrogance Iblis fell from grace, was expelled from Paradise, and became a *kafir* (infidel). With him, however, he took the first man, Adam, and Hawa, the first woman.⁶¹

Just as the harmony of Paradise was destroyed by the pride of Iblis, the stability and prosperity of Riau are disrupted by man's failure to respond to the Prophet's teaching and his reluctance to fight against the weakness of his own nature. The disintegrating forces in the kingdom move not at the behest of *takdir*, but are rather the result of mankind's wish to follow his own desires, his lusts or *hawa nafsu*. Of these the most destructive are *hantahan* (contentiousness, arrogance and stubbornness) and the desire to *membesarkan diri*, that is, to aggrandise oneself, like Iblis the fallen angel.⁶²

In the *Kitab Pengetahuan Bahasa* and the *Bustan al-Katibin*, Raja Ali Haji stresses that the only means of countering *hawa nafsu* and preventing the outbreak of conflict in society is strict adherence to the laws of Allah, the reading and memorization of religious books, and study under learned teachers. For Raja Ali Haji, right conduct is articulated in terms of Islamic precepts. With the guidance of religion, those qualities which place man above animals and bring him closer to God — *malu* (humility), *'ilmu* (knowledge) and *'akal* (understanding) — can be fostered. Possessing knowledge, understanding and humility, man does not speak arrogantly, or aggrandise himself, but delights in inquiry after religious truths and the life of the world to come.⁶³ Peace will invariably ensue when an entire society devotes itself to the preservation of *malu*, *'ilmu* and *'akal*.

⁵⁸ *Tuhfat*, p. 195.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 203, 207.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 38, 78, 90, 119, 197, 201.

⁶¹ *Kitab*, pp. 268, 324.

⁶² *Ibid.*; and *Tuhfat*, pp. 92, 110, 219, 340.

⁶³ *Kitab*, p. 227-85; *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, p. 4; van Ronkel, pp. 518-24; see also Nabih Amin Faris (tr.), *The Book of Knowledge* (Lahore, M. Ashraf, 1962) pp. 35-6, 221-8.

Nonetheless, these qualities are constantly threatened by human ignorance, and there can thus be no cessation of religious endeavour. As al-Ghazali had said, 'Disobedience to God, through following the lusts, is the heart's grievous ailment Man can resemble the angels by purifying desire, but can sink to the level of animals if he follows his lust.'⁶⁴ In the history of Johor Raja Ali Haji shows the consequences of uncontrolled *hawa nafsu*, which he compares to a fire in the hearts of men. The longer it burns, the more difficult it is to extinguish, until finally it blazes into a conflagration of fury, endangering the very existence of the kingdom. It is in these terms that the quarrels between Malays and Bugis are described.

When the Malays saw [the intimacy between Sultan Sulaiman and the Bugis], their hearts burned with the fire of envy and hatred which had been planted there. Their hearts burned, and their '*akal*' followed their *hawa nafsu*, not heeding the benefits or misfortunes of this world or that to come.⁶⁵

As depicted in the *Tuhfat*, this fire of envy is manifested in the many incidents of *fitnah*, (a mixture of propaganda, malicious gossip, and defamation). Repeatedly *fitnah* is blamed for conflict between Malays and Bugis; Riau, divided by it, resembles 'a *perahu* with two captains, or a country with two kings'.⁶⁶ Perpetrated by man because of his inborn failings, *fitnah* can bring about incalculable damage.

Riau, however, is fortunate in being ruled by men of knowledge and intelligence, whose '*ilmu* and '*akal*' are gifts from Allah. Through their wisdom peace is again restored when an oath of loyalty between Bugis and Malays is instituted in order to control *bantahan*. Each side swears that it will never be treacherous to the other, and recognizes that whoever breaks this vow will be destroyed by Allah, thrust from the Community of the Faithful, and cursed in the world to come.⁶⁷ The reiteration of this oath at times of crisis rights the line of history by curbing *hawa nafsu* and re-establishing a condition of harmony in the country.

On the other hand, Raja Ali Haji is conscious that kingship of itself does not make rulers invulnerable to ignorance and ambition. While his didactic and ethical works state that kings are subject to the same temptations as other men, the *Tuhfat* provides specific examples drawn from Malay history. Should rulers succumb to *hawa nafsu*, the consequences are severe indeed, and the entire

⁶⁴ L. Zolondek, *Book XX of al-Ghazali's Ihya' Ulum al-Din* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1963) pp.10-12.

⁶⁵ *Tuhfat*, pp. 103, 110.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 245. Further examples of *fitnah*, pp. 110, 154.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 127, 247, 346.

country will suffer. In Siak, for instance, civil war between two princes caused great trial among the people, with starvation and distress increasing as both men followed their *hawa nafsu*.⁶⁸ Even Riau's rulers are not exempt. During the troubles of 1787, Sultan Mahmud and the Raja Indera Bungsu resented the harsh orders of the Dutch resident. Their anger was 'like a fire, eating up their patience, and their patience was lost as they followed their *hawa nafsu* . . . and they did not think of what was to follow'.⁶⁹ When uncontrolled passion thus fills the ruler of a state, his ability to distinguish between right and wrong will disappear.⁷⁰ In the *Tuhfat*'s treatment of events in the eighteenth century, the epitome of this type of king is seen in the person of Sultan Mansur Syah of Trengganu. In contrast to princes like the martyred hero Raja Haji, Sultan Mansur stands out as a symbol of man's desire to place himself above others and his inability to control his *hawa nafsu*.

Dutch records indicate that Sultan Mansur had in fact aroused the enmity of both Malays and Bugis. Regarding himself as the rightful successor to Sultan Sulaiman (d. 1760), he had arrogated a considerable degree of power and had alienated many of the strongest Malay nobles in the Johor assembly.⁷¹ Some Malay princes also felt that his association with the Minangkabau brought dishonour on the Johor royal house,⁷² while as the leader of the anti-Bugis faction, Sultan Mansur had similarly incurred the hatred of the Bugis and their descendants. Distrusted by both sides, Sultan Mansur thus became a natural target of criticism in the various accounts of the eighteenth century which Raja Ali Haji consulted. However, to heighten the view of Sultan Mansur as a ruler who attempted to *membesarkan diri*, the *Tuhfat* takes considerable liberties with the source texts. When these are examined, it can be seen that subtle changes were introduced, so that Sultan Mansur consistently appears as the perpetrator of malicious lies and *fitnah* aimed at discrediting the Bugis and at destroying their alliance with the Malay ruler.⁷³ The combined effect of this rewriting and reinterpretation serves to exonerate both the Bugis and the Riau kings from any blame for the breakdown of Malay-Bugis relations. Instead, the accusations are deflected outside the Johor kingdom to Sultan Mansur and his

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 219.

⁷⁰ In the *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, pp. 58-9, Raja Ali Haji notes that '*akal* conveys the capacity to make moral differentiation.

⁷¹ KA 2885 OB 1761, Envoy A. Salice to Govs. Dekker and Boelen of Melaka following his visit to the Riau court, received 28 February 1759; and also his Daily Journal, under 1 May 1759.

⁷² See B.W. Andaya, 'An Examination of the Sources Concerning the Reign of Sultan Mansur Syah of Terengganu (1741-1793), with Special Reference to the *Tuhfat al-Nafis*', *JMBRAS*, 49, ii (1976) pp. 90-1.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, pp. 92-103.

following of Trengganu Malays. Ambitious, untrustworthy, cowardly, treacherous and arrogant, Sultan Mansur thus becomes an example of a ruler whose ambition over-ruled his devotion to God, a lesson from the past which provides a warning for the present. Raja Ali Haji then addresses himself to his own generation, 'those who have come after'. It was their duty to pray for God's forgiveness for the sins of all those at fault, whether Malays or Bugis, so that in the world to come they could be reconciled in harmony.⁷⁴

These comments, and the peace established between Bugis and Malays in 1804, mark a transition within the *Tuhfat* as Raja Ali Haji moves from an account of the eighteenth century, for which he drew mainly from manuscript sources, to a description of nineteenth century events, which he himself had witnessed. The fundamental relationship between these two sections, however, cannot be ignored. Raja Ali Haji's interpretation of the past had demonstrated how human behaviour influenced the course of history, for better or for worse. The duty of the present generation was to study these lessons, to emulate the actions of devout men now dead, and to preserve the society created by wise kings. As a good Muslim, Raja Ali Haji believed that the golden age of human civilization had existed in the time of the Prophet and the great teachers, and since then the quality of life had continued to deteriorate. While man was unable to arrest this inevitable decay, it was possible for him to delay the process 'by clinging to the ways of the forbears, by upholding and reliving the tradition of the ancients, by eschewing innovation'.⁷⁵ In establishing standards of correct conduct and providing examples of pious lives, the past represented the accumulated learning of centuries. Change by its very nature was bad, and those who initiated it were simply following their own desires and forgetting the welfare of coming generations. To ignore this was to repudiate '*ilmu* and '*akal*, which in turn meant the triumph of *hawa nafsu*.

Western incursion into Malay society in the nineteenth century introduced the idea of change as progress, and the notion that mankind was set on a path which would inevitably lead to moral and social betterment.⁷⁶ This was a revolutionary concept in Malay thinking and only a few, like the anglophile Munshi Abdullah, found the new doctrine attractive. In his autobiography Abdullah castigated those among his countrymen who refused to shake themselves free of the past and accused them of innate conservatism.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ *Tuhfat*, p. 230.

⁷⁵ G.E. von Grunebaum, *Medieval Islam* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1947) p. 240.

⁷⁶ For a discussion of this concept, see J.B. Bury, *The Idea of Progress* (New York, Macmillan, 1955) esp. ch. XVIII.

⁷⁷ For his sentiments see *Hikayat Abdullah*, p. 312.

Abdullah's remarks would have had little meaning for the majority of Malays,⁷⁸ but Raja Ali Haji had also pondered the question of modernization and his response was different. He clearly felt that the introduction of Western ways and non-Islamic values represented a very real challenge to Malay society. He was convinced that any changes in traditional customs would cause as much damage to a community as *bantahan* or *fitnah* by hastening the rate of retreat from the high standards of the past. Indeed, the harm brought about by innovation was already evident. Firstly, language had deteriorated. Like all men whose education had emphasized the work of classical Islamic scholars,⁷⁹ Raja Ali Haji considered respect for grammar to be vital in the maintenance of correct speech and graceful expression.⁸⁰ Al-Ghazali, in his *Book of Knowledge*, had himself endorsed the acquisition of linguistic skills, one of the 'auxiliary sciences', as a means of improving *'ilmu* and thus moving closer to God.⁸¹ Naturally this advice applied specifically to Arabic, 'the chosen vehicle of God's ultimate message',⁸² but in his own writing Raja Ali Haji emphasized that as far as possible Malay should model itself on Arabic syntax and endeavour to eliminate accretions which had crept in through exposure to other languages. In particular, he deplored the tendency among Malays to ape the English and Dutch by using such words as *bilang* (count) instead of *cakap* (say), and *kasi tahu* instead of *beri tahu* (inform).⁸³ Neglect of language, he argued, meant neglect of an established tradition, which would inevitably destroy 'the arrangement of the world and of the *kerajaan*'.⁸⁴

The decay in language, however, was only one aspect of the general decline in standards which Raja Ali Haji saw pervading Malay society. The group on Penyengat had only to look to Singapore and mainland Johor to see a way of life which in every respect opposed the principles of conduct they espoused. In these places fraternization with Europeans, the wearing of European dress, and the following of sports such as horse racing had become common practice among the Malay ruling elite. On Penyengat there was clearly a concern that the next generation, seduced by the attractions of this life style, would put aside the

⁷⁸ A. Sweeney and N. Phillips (eds. & trs.), *The Voyages of Mohammad Ibrahim Munshi* (Oxford in Asia historical memoirs) (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1975) p. xxiv.

⁷⁹ Raja Ali Haji drew most heavily from the work of al-Ghazali, but he also refers to the *Jawharat al-Tawhid* of Ibrahim bin Ibrahim bin Hasan al-Lakani (died 1041 A.D.). Other Arabic texts studied on Penyengat are listed in the *Tuhfat*, pp. 268, 335.

⁸⁰ Grunebaum, p. 241. See also *Kitab*, p. 262.

⁸¹ Faris, p. 39. See also Munshi Abdullah's comments on the importance of language in *Hikayat Abdullah*, p. 315.

⁸² Grunebaum, p. 37. Raja Ali Haji commended the use of Arabic to Malays, and warned them that those familiar with the holy language committed a sin if they failed to use it. *Kitab*, p. 412.

⁸³ *Kitab*, pp. 262, 412.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 221.

traditions of the past. Yamtuan Muda Ali himself composed a poem setting forth advice to young men, stressing the importance of correct conduct, a sweet disposition, refined speech, and the observance of religion and custom.⁸⁵ Another prominent Penyengat figure, Haji Ibrahim, complained about the indifference of youth to the old ways, and their unwillingness to study *adat* and *adab* (cultured behaviour).⁸⁶ Raja Ali Haji was more specific, criticizing those Malays who dressed in the English, Dutch, or Chinese manner: wearing trousers, coats, socks, shoes 'so that at night one would not know they were Malay'.⁸⁷ As al-Ghazali had warned, clothing was intended to cover man's nakedness, not to disguise the true self and 'dissemble before creatures, so that you go astray'.⁸⁸

Custom has been established by godly men who possessed 'ilmu and 'akal; change comes about when society turns away from the standards they created to follow its own desires. As we have seen, Raja Ali Haji believed that kings had a special role to play in the preservation of a community's morality by providing an example of right conduct. Turning to the *Tuhfat*, one finds that in its account of the nineteenth century, the good ruler is identified by his efforts to govern according to the highest traditions of the past. Sultan Abdul Rahman (r. 1823-1832), for example, is depicted as a praiseworthy prince because of the encouragement he gave to Islam. During his reign teachers came to foster the growth of *tarikat* and guide the ruler's religious studies, while Sultan Abdul Rahman himself dressed in the Arab manner at the Friday service, led his officials in worship, and often sounded the call to prayer.⁸⁹ The Yamtuan Muda, Raja Ja'afar (r. 1805-1831), similarly conscious of his obligations to society, sponsored religious studies and asked advice from his spiritual elders in matters of government. He never attempted to *membesarkan diri*, but in humility ate the rice which his slaves had left. He delighted in reading holy books and listening to the deeds of former kings; he inquired into matters concerning things forbidden and those permitted.⁹⁰ His son, Yamtuan Muda Ali (r. 1845-1857), was also zealous in his pursuit of religion, proscribing practices which went against Islamic tenets — gambling, cock-fighting, the wearing of gold and silk, frivolous behaviour between the sexes.⁹¹ Such kings aimed not to innovate but to restore and perpetuate the purer, nobler society which existed in times gone by.

⁸⁵ Netscher, 'Raadgeving'.

⁸⁶ Haji Ibrahim, p. 51.

⁸⁷ 'Jika malam tiada kenal akan orang Melayu . . .', *Kitab*, p. 262.

⁸⁸ Watt, *The Faith of al-Ghazali*, p. 92; *Kitab*, p. 262.

⁸⁹ *Tuhfat*, p. 266.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 267-8.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 346-48.

Dutch records reinforce Raja Ali Haji's perception of these rulers as 'industrious in religion and attached to *adat*',⁹² and in the *Tuhfat* their reigns become a yardstick by which others can be measured. The evidence available from nineteenth century Riau suggests that most kings recognized that they too would be judged by these criteria. In 1870, for example, Elisa Netscher remarked that the Yamtuan Muda, a nephew of Raja Ali Haji was 'strongly religious, *hajis* and men versed in religion having the greatest influence on him'.⁹³ In this context the *Tuhfat*'s account of Sultan Mahmud (1823-1864), who refused to subscribe to the accepted standards of kingly conduct, assumes added significance. By actively rejecting the established model of kingship, his behaviour was regarded as a direct challenge to an acknowledged tradition.

Sultan Mahmud was proclaimed ruler by his doting father in 1832 when he was only ten years old.⁹⁴ Even in his youth his defiance of religion and custom aroused comment from Dutch officials, and is recorded by Raja Ali Haji in the *Tuhfat*.⁹⁵ As a young man, Sultan Mahmud made it apparent that he found life in Riau dull in comparison with the rapidly changing, 'modern' world of Singapore and Johor. During his frequent trips to these places, Sultan Mahmud spent lavishly in an effort to obtain a position in European society, shocking orthodox Muslims by becoming a Freemason.⁹⁶ On Lingga itself he build a costly European-style house, ornately furnished, something which ran counter to Raja Ali Haji's views of proper conduct for Malays.⁹⁷

Lingga's administration suffered by Sultan Mahmud's extravagance and his indifference to government, especially marked when contrasted with Riau, ruled by the Bugis Yamtuan Muda.⁹⁸ At the time Resident Netscher felt that the young ruler was weak and misled rather than ill-intentioned, but the Penyengat leadership was highly critical of his failure to act in accordance with *adat* and Islamic injunctions. Sultan Mahmud's blatant departure from accepted norms culminated in his attempts to postpone the appointment of a

⁹² See Angelbeek's comments on the piety of Sultan Abdul Rahman and his nobles in his *Report*, (Koninklijk Instituut, Handschrift 494).

⁹³ Netscher, *Memorie*, fol. 11.

⁹⁴ *Tuhfat*, p. 326; *Overzicht Staatskundig van Nederlands Indie, 1838* (Koninklijk Instituut Handschrift 115) n.p.

⁹⁵ For example, he ignored Islamic injunctions by keeping a large pack of hunting dogs, *Overzicht*; See also V. Matheson, 'Mahmud, Sultan of Riau and Lingga (1823-1864)' *Indonesia*, 13 (April 1972) p. 139.

⁹⁶ He also took a Eurasian woman as mistress, and had a son by her. Netscher, *De Nederlanders*, p. 299; Matheson, 'Mahmud', pp. 138-9.

⁹⁷ Matheson, 'Mahmud', p. 139; Netscher, *De Nederlanders*, p. 299; *Kitab*, p. 411; T.J. Willer, *Memorie* (Ministry of Colonies, V. 30 January 1858, 3/110), fol. 6.

⁹⁸ Willer, *Memorie*, fol. 7. See 'Bijdrage tot de Kennis der Residentie Rio', *TNI*, 15, i-vi (1853) p. 413.

Yamtuan Muda and even to abolish the post entirely.⁹⁹ The Penyengat group, already hostile, was now totally alienated. When the ruler's continual flouting of the resident's orders and Batavia's stated policies reached such a peak that the Dutch decided to depose him, most of the nobles and princes on Penyengat, including Raja Ahmad and Raja Ali Haji, gave their support.

The classical Islamic scholars whom Raja Ali Haji admired had seen themselves as the conscience of a people, privileged because they could point out the failings of kings.¹⁰⁰ In his didactic works like the *Thamarat al-Mahammah* and the *Intizam Waza'if al-Malik*, Raja Ali Haji tried to follow the example of his spiritual mentors. The *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, containing his views on kingship, was completed in March 1859, only seventeen months after Sultan Mahmud's deposition in October 1857. This deposition had shocked many inhabitants of the Riau-Lingga kingdom, and in Reteh a rebellion had even been raised on Sultan Mahmud's behalf.¹⁰¹ It is probable that there is a direct link between Sultan Mahmud's misconduct, the rebellion, and Raja Ali Haji's decision to compile a work which would set down the responsibilities of the ruler in a society. In the *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, Raja Ali Haji explicitly states that a king who forsook his religion in words or deeds, who was careless of the needs of Muslims and failed to improve their lot, who consorted with women in an unapproved manner, was no longer an acceptable ruler. The succession should then pass 'to the most fitting'.¹⁰²

The *Tuhfat*'s account of events leading up to the deposition is clearly critical of a ruler who would not conform to the desired pattern of kingly behaviour, although direct condemnation is put into the mouths of outsiders, such as the King of Siam and the Dutch resident. Raja Ali Haji was, after all, himself inculcated with Malay respect for kingship and had no wish to be remembered as someone who had committed *derhaka* (treason) through public denunciation of a ruler.¹⁰³ Sultan Mahmud, however, is clearly culpable, and the *Tuhfat* carefully presents evidence of his failure to carry out his royal duties. In Singapore, he was involved in 'unsuitable actions', frequenting places which were not in keeping with the *adat* of rulers. The young man's many absences there prompted Raja Ali Haji to write 'it would be much better for [the Sultan]

⁹⁹ Presumably so that he could draw the Yamtuan Muda's income from duties and concessions for himself, and also to vent his anger against the Bugis princes of Riau whose advice and authority must have irked him.

¹⁰⁰ Grunebaum, p. 248.

¹⁰¹ *Tuhfat*, pp. 364-5; Netscher, *De Nederlanders*, pp. 309-29.

¹⁰² *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, pp. 15-16.

¹⁰³ L. Andaya, p. 8. It is significant that the *Tuhfat* emphasizes that the princes of Riau-Lingga would not have their names associated with the deposition of Sultan Mahmud, for they did not wish to be accused of treason. It was to be an action of the Dutch government. *Tuhfat*, pp. 360-1.

to remain on Lingga to improve his kingdom and make it more prosperous'.¹⁰⁴ When he was at home, we are told that Mahmud occupied himself with 'idle amusements'¹⁰⁵ and refused to consult with his ministers, as was expected of a ruler.

He did not wish to listen to the advice or teaching of the elders and followed his own *hawa nafsu* with his young attendants. This was the root of all the misunderstandings . . . nor did he heed the decisions of the Resident of Riau, or the inhabitants of the country, but still followed his own desires.¹⁰⁶

If the *Tuhfat* is considered in conjunction with the *Thamarat al-Mahammah*, we can see that Sultan Mahmud, like Sultan Mansur of Terengganu, is depicted as a ruler propelled by *hawa nafsu*, unmindful of the obligations placed upon him as a ruler, and indifferent to the lessons of the past. Through Raja Ali Haji's writing, the doubtful were shown that Dutch action had been justified, for only thus could time-honoured tradition be reinstated and harmony restored to the realm.

This explanation of Mahmud's deposition is the last major event in the *Tuhfat*, and Raja Ali Haji ends his epic by describing the tranquillity which followed. Mahmud's uncle, Sulaiman, is installed as Sultan, but he is content to leave the administration in the hands of his capable Yamtuan Muda. The links between the past and present are reaffirmed and the rulers of Riau and Lingga again look to their forbears for models of correct conduct. No *fitnah*, quarrels, or jealousy disturb the peace of the kingdom; religion is fostered, *adat* is upheld, and man is drawing closer to God. 'And this is the state of affairs at the time of writing this history'.¹⁰⁷

The writings of Raja Ali Haji of Riau show that he was more than a historian in the narrow sense of the word. He was a teacher, a theologian, a man committed to the preservation of certain standards and ideals, with a deep sense of responsibility towards his own community. His understanding of the past was intimately related to his religious views, which were in turn based on the work of the most revered Islamic scholars. The scope of Raja Ali Haji's writing indicates that he shared al-Ghazali's opinion on the power of the pen,

¹⁰⁴ *Tuhfat*, p. 338.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 339-40.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 340, 365.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 379.

'mightier than ten thousand swords'.¹⁰⁸ Treating a number of different subjects in a variety of literary genres, Raja Ali Haji attempted to reach an audience far greater than the small group on Penyengat.¹⁰⁹ Unlike his contemporary, Munshi Abdullah, he was not an isolated voice but a widely respected scholar who expressed the views held by most educated Malays. Long after his death his memory lived on. The lithographing of several of his texts in the 1880s demonstrates that Raja Ali Haji's teaching was still regarded as relevant for Malay society, and in 1896 a manuscript copy of the *Tuhfat* was presented to a retiring resident as a farewell gift.¹¹⁰ In the early 1890s Raja Ali Haji's sons were instrumental in the establishment of a study club for Islamic guidance, the *persekutuan Rusydiah*, which published books and religious treatises.¹¹¹ Modified and developed, many of Raja Ali Haji's ideas were later expounded by the Kaum Muda of Singapore, some of whom had been closely associated with the Penyengat group.¹¹²

The *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, Raja Ali Haji's most famous work, has established his reputation in Malay historiography. Encompassing the entire Malay world, it was conceived on a scale unprecedented in most traditional literature. Nonetheless, the *Tuhfat* is not only a historical epic, but a statement of belief, in which theological and ethical argument is applied to an account of the past. The lessons which it contains were intended both for the common man and for the ruler himself. Harmony within the state is possible only when society's relationship with God is also harmonious. The conflicts which had destroyed the peace of Riau in years gone by were the result of man's own actions, of his desire to follow his *hawa nafsu*. Fortunately, rulers possessed of '*akal* and '*ilmu* had been raised up by God so that stability could be restored and the kingdom returned to its previous condition of harmony.

Though Raja Ali Haji was not the only nineteenth century Malay who composed works for the guidance of rulers, nor the sole historian of the period,¹¹³ he is distinguished from other Malay writers by his ability, evident in the *Tuhfat al-Nafis*, to present a view of Malay history in terms of Muslim

¹⁰⁸ Quoted in the *Bustan al-Katibin*. See van Ronkel, p. 521; and Watt, *The Faith of al-Ghazali*, p. 140.

¹⁰⁹ Raja Ali Haji was obviously aware of the possibility of reaching a wider audience through publication. See above, fn. 33. He had himself consulted lithographed books. *Tuhfat*, p. 2.

¹¹⁰ Koninklijk Instituut Handschrift 630.

¹¹¹ W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Yale Southeast Asia Studies 2) (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1967) p. 62; see also B.W. Andaya, 'From Rum to Tokyo: The Search for Anticolonial Allies by the Rulers of Riau, 1899-1914', *Indonesia*, 24 (1977) pp. 126-7.

¹¹² Roff, pp. 61-2. V. 12 September 1907, No. 67. G.A. Hazcu to Governor-General, 30 August 1906 (Department of Internal Affairs, The Hague).

¹¹³ See, for example, the text Leiden Cod. Or. 6057, composed for the guidance of the ruler of Siak in 1818, by Shaykh Abdullah. Copies of the text were made at Penyengat in 1881 and 1885. See G. Bowtell, 'The Hikayat Mareskalek' (B.A. Hons. thesis, The Australian National University, 1973).

ethics. For him the recording of past events was not intended to document change and 'progress', but to perpetuate the memories of times when high standards of conduct were honoured and observed. It is the duty of kings to maintain these standards and, when this obligation is forgotten, the consequences are felt by the entire community. To alter the 'arrangement' (*aturan*) of society is to court disaster.¹¹⁴ Man has the responsibility of preserving what the past has bequeathed in order to retain a shadow of the blessed life which once, long ago, was his. This is the moral which history holds not merely for the present but for the future.

¹¹⁴ *Kitab*, p. 221.

EXTENDING THE PAST

The preceding section has discussed court-sponsored histories which draw on the past for a moral validation of contemporary institutions or political interests. In the following section Michael Vickery presents a variation on this theme. He argues that the significance of the Cambodian royal chronicles lay not so much in the meaning of past events they recorded but in the imperative requirement of *having* a plausible recorded past. A recorded antiquity thus becomes an item of regalia necessary for validation of kingship.

THE COMPOSITION AND TRANSMISSION OF THE AYUDHYA AND CAMBODIAN CHRONICLES*

Michael Vickery

I am afraid the reader may find my contribution somewhat marginal to the structure defined by the subject matter and treatment of my colleagues, who all go directly to the problems of perception or use of the past, while I only touch them indirectly and reluctantly after a tedious exposition of textual filiation and a search for the accurate chronology and factual background which some may feel to be out of fashion.

Perhaps in justification of the importance of my subject both to the study of the past *per se* and to the perception of the past in later times, I should begin by stating that the chronicles I am going to discuss comprise nearly the totality of the indigenous records available for the history of the lower Menam basin and Cambodia from the end of the Angkor period (early fourteenth century) to the early nineteenth century, and they are nearly all late compositions whose accuracy for anything before the seventeenth century has long been subject to controversy.

Among the literature of the other areas included in this collection, the narratives of Roti bear the greatest resemblance to my texts, which are also concerned almost entirely with ruling families, even though the geographical area is much larger; and just as in Roti, whenever a dynasty or kingdom disappeared, its chronicles were no longer maintained and its stories were forgotten. Thus, there is no chronicle of the Angkor Empire or of the first Thai kingdom, Sukhothai, the histories of which are twentieth century reconstructions based on inscriptions.

Unlike the Roti narratives, the Thai and Cambodian royal chronicles are always written – I have never heard of, or seen reference to, recitation – and there is little concern with nuances of language, except for the use of royal vocabulary for the king's activities, something which in those countries is so much a part of the usual language that no comment is necessary.

Neither are the chronicles of much interest as a literary genre, such as the *hikayat* studied by Errington. The Thai and Cambodian royal chronicles are either history in the Rotinese manner of 'relating a series of structured [and I would add purportedly true] events within the parameters of time and place', or they are nothing.

* For full details of the research on which this article is based see M. Vickery, 'Cambodia After Angkor, the Chronicular Evidence for the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Centuries' (Ph.D. thesis, Yale, 1977).

There are other Cambodian and Thai narratives — the *tamnan* discussed by Charnvit Kasetsiri — which are outside the chronicle tradition, although often concerned with some of the same material; but they are not generally rooted in any clearly defined time or place, and, although they are of interest as ‘perceptions of the past’, I would maintain that they cannot be successfully explained except in relation to more factual history derived from an analysis of the chronicles, inscriptions and external evidence.

It seems that my use of ‘true’ and ‘false’ may have irritated some of my colleagues. Anthony Reid remarked in a letter that we all manipulate the past in writing about it. That is true, but such manipulation is on a quite different order from the displacement and invention of 150 years of history which I believe has occurred in the Cambodian chronicles. All of us would agree, I am sure, that at each point of time in the past there were discrete events in which definite individuals participated, and that part of historical investigation is the discovery, identification and clarification of such individuals and events.

One participant in the colloquium discussion said that the record of the past is monumentally dull, and I believe Berg once made a similar remark about the facts of early Javanese history. But how are we to identify and interpret later perceptions of the past without knowing quite a bit about what the hard dull facts of that past were. Otherwise we may get into the difficulty recognized by Prof. Wolters of too arbitrarily ‘constructing the external situations’, or using ‘some unerring intuition in sketching out the relevant background’.¹

For if a chronicle, or any purported history, consists of nothing but solid facts, drawn from unassailable archival extracts, or even somewhat embellished versions of the same, it is difficult to infer any reason for its composition except concern for an accurate record, although we might wish to ask why such a record was desired at a date rather than earlier. It is only when the contents can be shown factually inaccurate that we must search for other reasons for the composition. Furthermore, if I am interested in the fifteenth century, and my written sources all date from the eighteenth or nineteenth, my first concern is to determine whether their information is true. The reasons for their composition are outside my principal area of interest, and would be more important for a student of the later period.

What makes the articles below by Ito and L. Andaya, for example, so interesting and so valuable with respect to perceptions of the past, is that in each case the true sequence of basic events and the identities of the protagonists are known from other sources, and the special perceptions of Ito’s and Andaya’s narratives are clearly highlighted. Obviously, both our standard history of the southern Celebes and, I would say, Andaya’s treatment of the Arung Palakka

¹ In his ‘closing remarks’ at the Canberra Colloquium, not reprinted here.

story, would be quite different if the only information available today were the latter. I would also suggest speculation on what our perceptions of European history would be if, through some terrible natural catastrophe or burning of the books, our knowledge of pre-nineteenth century Spain and France consisted solely of what has filtered through into the *Historia Famosa*.

These suggestions are not meant to be facetious. Such is precisely the situation which faces the historian of early Ayudhya (Ayutthaya) or post-Angkorean Cambodia, and the first task for the historian is still to rediscover the past before trying to interpret it.

I do not think the factual past in this case will be dull. The why and how of the decline and disappearance of the Angkor Empire and the extent to which it was perpetuated in its successor states should be one of the more interesting stories of Southeast Asian history. At least, to note one of the concerns of Prof. Wang Gungwu, it will be of interest to social scientists who wish to investigate the way in which cultures, social structures and economic systems succeed one another and possibly determine future developments, and who need for their interpretation precise data about the events of the past. What is dull is the succession of statements which make up a large part of the chronicles, but since they are almost all we have, we must determine very precisely what they are and what they are not before trying to relate them to other types of evidence.

The chronicles of each of these kingdoms fall into two major traditions plus assorted fragments outside the main families. Since the oldest extant texts are from Ayudhya, I shall start with them.²

The first major tradition is that of *Luang Prasert* (LP), a chronicle which, according to its preamble, was composed in 1680 in the reign of King Naray and was based on archival records, a claim which its chronology, from the early sixteenth century, at least, seems to substantiate. Its story ends in 1605 in the midst of King Naresuan's last campaign, in a manner which suggests that it was originally longer. Its entries are very brief, little more than a listing of events and dates, almost as though it were a summary of a more detailed work. Belonging to the tradition is a copy made in the reign of King Taksin, and a very brief fragment of the same date (1774), designated the *1136 Fragment*, which has a very detailed account of events between 1564 and 1569 with LP dates.³

² Transcription of Thai and Khmer terms and proper names is according to a phonetic system which has frequently been used in general works, modified in a few cases to facilitate comparison.

³ *Prachum Phongsawadan* (PP), *Kurusapha* edition, Vol. I; *Prachum Cotmayhet Samay Ayudhya*, Vol. I, pp. 93-103; my review of same in *JSS*, 60, ii (1972) p. 326; PP, Vol. III, 151-74.

Wherever comparable this tradition agrees with the Burmese chronicles and with the European reports which begin to appear at the end of the sixteenth century, and this has given it a reputation for chronological accuracy which has been extended back to the fourteenth century. The LP manuscript is clearly from the Ayudhya period, that is, sometime between 1680 and 1767, but there is internal and comparative evidence which suggests that extant LP is not the original text of 1680, but a copy at least once, and perhaps twice removed. All the LP manuscripts were lost from some time at the end of the eighteenth century until the early twentieth century, and thus exerted no influence during the first important period of modern Thai historiography in the nineteenth century.

I have chosen to call the second Ayudhyan tradition the '1157 tradition', or simply *1157*, since the oldest extant text belonging to it, and represented today by the chronicle of *Phan Chanthanumat* (P), dates from *cula* era 1157/A.D. 1795. It was composed at the order of Rama I, undoubtedly as part of his restoration, and then went through several revisions, all but the last of which changed the text negligibly, and which include the versions known variously as 'British Museum', 'Bradley', 'Paramanujit', 'Two-volume', 'Phonnarat/Wanarat',⁴ and finally the *Royal Autograph Chronicle* (RA), prepared in the reign of King Mongkut. The immediately apparent differences between the two traditions are the much more detailed textual matter of the latter beginning in the early sixteenth century and the dates, which from the end of the fourteenth century to about 1630 differ by four to twenty years without any pattern or regularity being easily discernible. By the second half of the sixteenth century comparison with external evidence shows that the dates of *1157* are simply wrong, just as later on, towards the end of the seventeenth century, in the reigns of Naray and Phetracha, when *1157* again becomes aberrant, the true dates are known from the writings of contemporary Europeans. Although RA acquired the status of an official history, the rediscovery of LP and study of seventeenth century European writings has resulted in the rejection of its chronology, even though this chronology has not yet been explained.

Within the *1157* tradition there is also a well-known short chronicle, or summarized history,⁵ and a fragment composed in *cula* 1145/A.D. 1783, the dates of which differ by one year from *1157*, and which appears to have been a first step from the LP chronology to *1157*.

The first to suggest a relationship among all these texts was Prince Damrong, who realized that LP was the earliest and that the others all devolved from it, although he offered no full explanation for the chronological differences and the extra textual material of *1157*.⁶

⁴ Bibliographical information on all these can be found in the bibliographical appendix.

⁵ D.K. Wyatt, 'The Abridged Royal Chronicle of Ayudhya', *JSS*, 61, i (1973) pp. 25-50.

⁶ Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, 'The Story of the Records of Siamese History', *JSS*, 11, ii (1914) pp. 1-20.

There are at least two Ayudyan chronicles outside these main traditions: one fairly well known and a 'tradition' in its own right with at least three extant variants, and another, fragmentary, which as far as I have been able to determine, was ignored until I found it in the National Library in Bangkok in 1971.

The first of these is the chronicle in Pali included in the 1789 religious history, *Sangitiyavamsa*, one version of which was translated into French by George Coedès in 1918, and another published together with a Thai translation in 1923. A third text in this tradition is represented by Jeremias van Vliet's Dutch chronicle of 1640. As I have treated this in detail elsewhere, it is only necessary to list the main points here.⁷ Internal evidence and comparison with other texts show that in van Vliet's day this tradition was represented by a written Thai version, which was only later translated into Pali. It was probably compiled in the time of Song Tham or Prasat Thong, and based on earlier written material which was not archival, but derived from oral tradition. The chronology is aberrant, but much closer to LP than to 1157, and there are certain textual details which differ from both the major traditions. Although most of the latter seem to be less accurate, a few, preserved particularly in van Vliet, may represent true information omitted from LP and 1157.

The other chronicle fragment, Ms. No. 2/k.125, covers only the years 1441-1444, but is interesting because it mixes the story of Ayudhya's relations with the north and with Cambodia in a way totally different from the other histories, and especially because of the unusual detail it provides about the period just after the major Ayudyan invasion of Angkor, in 1431 according to LP, some of which is found in the Cambodian *Ang Eng* fragment (see below), but most of which is otherwise unknown. In contrast to the other Ayudyan chronicles, which ignore Cambodia between 1431 and the 1530s (LP dates), and the Cambodian chronicles which claim that the Thai were driven out of Angkor within a year by Ponhea Yat, 2/k.125 shows a longer period of Thai control and a complex period of struggle by Ponhea Yat against the Thai, which is not yet resolved when the text breaks off. It implies that the Thai occupied Angkor for at least twelve years before being driven out. Since this text is a fragment, with both beginning and end missing, and no indication of provenance or date of composition, it is difficult to evaluate, but the script indicates late Ayudhya period, errors in the text show it is a copy of an earlier document, and much of its information appears to be genuine.⁸

⁷ See my review of Jeremias van Vliet, *The Short History of the Kings of Siam* in *JSS*, 64, ii (1976) pp. 207-36. *Sangitiyavamsa* is also discussed by Craig Reynolds in the present volume.

⁸ See M. Vickery, 'The 2/k.125 Fragment, a Lost Chronicle of Ayutthaya', *JSS*, 65, i (1977) pp. 1-80. The date of the script was suggested by Mr Prasarn Bunprakong in a conversation in June 1975.

Ayudhyan 'history' as presented in modern standard works has generally been the content of RA with LP dates, modified from the early seventeenth century on by the evidence of European writers, and with the proviso that there is a period in the second half of the fifteenth century which still requires investigation to determine its factual framework⁹ and, for some scholars, the further proviso that relations with Cambodia require more intensive study. In fact, it is only in the last connection that 1157, in spite of its much greater length, differs seriously from LP with respect to content. Otherwise, the length of 1157 is due simply to expansion, through added description, of events recorded in LP. With respect to Cambodia, though, 1157 has two additional invasions of Angkor, in 1351-1353 and between 1384 and 1387, plus several other entries in the sixteenth century which are unknown to LP. Two noteworthy attempts to reconcile the various dates for conquests of Angkor were by Lawrence Briggs, who rejected all but LP's 1431, and Wolters, whose conclusions, based on the Cambodian chronicles alone in conjunction with Chinese sources, seem to support, more or less, the early dates of 1157.¹⁰

The two major traditions of the Cambodian chronicles have not, to my knowledge, been described as such before. The known extant texts are one composed in 1818, translated by Garnier, and which I call *Nong*, after its compiler. A nineteenth century Thai translation has also been published.¹¹ Another chronicle, designated by Coedès as 'Nupparot' or 'Vat Satbor' is a copy of *Nong*. It has also been published in Thai translation and very recently in the Cambodian original.¹² There are other manuscripts, in part or in whole copies of *Nong*, including a fragment recently published in French by Martine Piat.¹³

Another well-known document, the *Liste Chronologique*, is a summarized version of a *Nong*-type tradition, with some differences in dates which I discuss below.¹⁴

⁹ For the 15th century see Wyatt's note 47, p. 63, in J. van Vliet, *The Short History of the Kings of Siam* (L. Andaya, tr. and D. Wyatt, ed.) (Bangkok, The Siam Society, 1975). The problems concerning Cambodia will be obvious in what follows here. The best-known general history is W.A.R. Wood, *A History of Siam* (Bangkok, Charlemnit, 1959).

¹⁰ L.P. Briggs, 'Siamese Attacks on Angkor Before 1430', *FEQ*, 8 (1948) pp. 3-33; O.W. Wolters, 'The Khmer King at Basan (1371-3) and the Restoration of the Cambodian Chronology During the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries', *Asia Major*, 7, i (1966) pp. 44-89.

¹¹ G. Coedès, 'Essai de classification des documents historiques cambodgiens conservés à la Bibliothèque de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient', *BEFEO*, 18, ix (1918) pp. 15-30; Wolters, 'Basan'; PP, Vol. I.

¹² Coedès; *Racha Phonswadan Krung Kamphucha* (Bangkok, 2513); Dik Keam (ed.), *Phongsavoda Khmae*, ms. of Vatt sitpur (Phnom Penh, 1975). I wish to thank David Chandler for providing me with a copy of the latter.

¹³ M. Piat, 'Chroniques royales khmer', *BSEI*, n.s. 49, i (1974) pp. 35-144.

¹⁴ See Wolters, 'Basan', for discussion of *Liste* and further bibliography.

What I identify as the second major tradition, and what I choose to call *Version II*, is represented by the translation of Moura, in part by the *History of Leclère*, and by the chronicle which Coedès described as due to commissions appointed in 1903 and 1913, and from which he translated a passage relative to the foundation of Phnom Penh.¹⁵ In Cambodia this last chronicle became quasi-official, was continued up into the reign of Sihanouk (see David Chandler's contribution to the present volume), and is known under the name of the chief of the 1903 commission, Minister of the Palace Thiounn, a designation which I maintain. All other French versions, and standard textbook histories, are based either on one of the above or on a synthesis of the two major traditions.

In addition to these two traditions there are at least two important fragments, *Ang Eng*, well-known through the work of Coedès and Wolters,¹⁶ presented to the Thai court in 1796, and extant only in a Thai translation made at that time; and another one, hitherto, I believe, undescribed, presented to the Thai court in 1808, and also extant only in Thai translation. It covers the period 1570 to 1628, and I have chosen to call it the *1170 Fragment* after the *cula* era date of its presentation.¹⁷

My classification into two major traditions is based on textual content only, for the dates are an even more complex matter than in the Ayudhyan chronicles and must be treated separately. That is, within the *Nong* textual tradition, including *Liste*, there are at least four different chronologies, starting at different dates, but tied to a rigid pattern of identical animal years. Thus, *Nong* opens with King Nippan Bat reigning in dog year 1346, *Liste* starts with dog year 1382, ms. 1403 of the Buddhist Institute, Phnom Penh, begins NB's reign in dog year 1394, and ms. P64 of the EFEO raises the curtain in dog year 1466.¹⁸

The *Version II* texts, although generally telling the same story, seem to be different compositions up to the seventeenth century, at which time it becomes obvious that they were copied from *Nong*, and copied badly. Throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries *Version II* is generally much longer, events are embellished, description is added, long conversations between protagonists are included, and there is a large amount of what seems to be oral tradition, perhaps pure folklore.¹⁹ As to dates, most *Version II* texts begin either at *Nong*'s

¹⁵ J. Moura, *Le Royaume du Cambodge* (Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1883); A. Leclère, *Histoire du Cambodge* (Paris, P. Geuthner, 1914); Coedès; G. Coedès, *BEFEO*, 13, vi (1913) pp. 6-11.

¹⁶ Coedès, 'Essai'; Wolters, 'Basan'.

¹⁷ Published in PP, Vols. XLIV and XLV.

¹⁸ There is a reference to P64 in Coedès, 'Essai', where it is attributed to a directive of King Norodom in 1869. The preamble of ms. 1403 also says it was ordered by Norodom at the same time, but in their early reigns the two are quite different. I wish to thank Claude Jacques for providing me with details of the chronological framework of P64.

¹⁹ This extra detail, and the long narrative passages of the Ayudhyan 1157 tradition, provide just the sort of material with which one might profitably study perceptions after the manner of some of the other contributors to this volume. I cannot undertake it here, having used up my allotted space in describing the chronicle traditions in their entirety, and I am not certain that enough is known about the source and date of composition of this extra material to permit a profitable analysis to be undertaken. To interested readers for whom the chronicles are accessible I recommend the 16th century of the long Cambodian versions and the reigns of Naray and Phetracha in 1157.

1346 or within a couple of years of it, and the first few reigns, with a Thai invasion, are also very close to the *Nong* pattern. The most important diagnostic features of *Version II* are the lengthening of the period between two fourteenth century Thai invasions from twenty years to between fifty and seventy years, together with the insertion of two or three extra reigns and the stretching of other reign periods which this requires. Then, to compensate for the lengthening of reigns in this period, some reigns at the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries are shortened, and in *Moura* shortened so drastically that its dates for most of the sixteenth century are ten years in advance of *Nong*. *Thiounn*, however, for the sixteenth century, is very close to the *Nong* dates, and we may attribute the first shortening to awareness that some dates at the end of the sixteenth century were unassailable, and *Moura*'s extra shortening to adoption of erroneous dates from the Ayudhyan 1157 tradition.

The AE fragment, as Coedes and Wolters made clear, opens with the *Nong* date, but thereafter, both textually and chronologically, is quite different from the major traditions. The 1170 *Fragment* generally agrees with *Nong* as to dates, but is much more detailed, and includes one story, a piece of folklore, found in *Version II*, showing that although the latter texts are all late, part of the tradition itself may be as old as *Nong*, or older.

From the 1590s on there is sufficient material from contemporary Europeans to show that the history of *Nong* is in general true, even though it usually consists of little more than royal names, dates and wars. For the earlier period, western writers have generally accepted *Nong* proper over *Version II* without, however, giving clear reasons for the choice, or even indicating clearly that serious differences existed.

Just as in the case of the Thai chronicles, the most serious problem, and the one on which the texts most widely diverge, is the question of relations between Siam and Cambodia, which for the Cambodian chronicles means two Thai conquests of Angkor in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, another intervention in the late fifteenth century, and a series of attacks in both directions in the sixteenth century, culminating in the Thai conquest of Lovek in 1593-1594, an event known to contemporary Europeans. Both Briggs and Wolters attempted, as I noted above, to settle the problem of the early invasions. Briggs's solution involved the acceptance of the reign sequence of the Cambodian chronicles, textual exegesis to show that the only true invasion of Angkor was the second attack mentioned by the Cambodian chronicles or the third found in 1157, which corresponded to LP's entry for 1431, and the revision of the Cambodian dates accordingly. Wolters' conclusions, on the other hand, included two Thai conquests, in 1369 and 1388, revision of the reign sequence to fit, more or less, the picture presented by Chinese records, and adjustment of other segments of the chronicle as required. For Wolters, Nippan Bat's reign, with which the chronicles open, would have begun about 1362, and for Briggs, in 1404.

Any satisfactory explanation, though, must account for all of the dates for these events in all of the chronicles, and also for all the entries of the 1157 tradition not found elsewhere. For with respect to Thai invasions of Cambodia, the various Cambodian chronicles place them in 1352/1372, 1352/1420, 1388/1408, 1369/1388, 1392/1457, 1472/1492, and even this list is not complete, while Briggs and Wolters dealt with only a few of these traditions.

With respect to our subject, the multiple chronologies of the *Nong* tradition should already suggest that for the chroniclers the past was something to be manipulated, that there were in fact no true records, and that the pattern of events may have been artificially composed.

Concerning an investigation of the factual history of the period, faced with four chronological schemes, the historian may not *a priori* assume any one of them to be most accurate. However, since the two latest, beginning in 1394 and 1466, show impossible conjunctions of dates and events in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when the true chronology is known, they may probably be rejected, leaving only *Nong* proper and *Liste* for consideration.

The first clue to the explanation of the various chronologies was the recognition of a system of traditional arithmetic which was used for the calculation of reign lengths and other time periods by the chroniclers of all regions of Siam as well as Cambodia up to the time when European methods began to prevail, generally in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Whenever addition is carried out by this method the base year is taken as '1' and the total is one year less than in modern arithmetic. For example, if a chronicler had the information that King X took the throne in 1500 and reigned for five years, he would count 1500, 1501, 1502, 1503, 1504, and end the reign at this last date. If King Y then replaced King X and reigned for six years, the addition would begin with 1504 and end in 1509 whereas modern addition would place the total of these two periods in 1511. Over a long series the difference between the two systems is considerable.²⁰ Likewise, if a chronicler had records with complete dates, and in his final composition he wished to specify the length of periods, he would consider 1500-1505 to be six years, or 1610-1628 nineteen years.

It is obvious that if a chronicle were first written with traditional arithmetic, and then recopied by someone educated in modern arithmetic, either the dates or the period lengths would be changed from the original pattern. In fact, this is what happened in the Cambodian texts of the late nineteenth century, that is, all of the extant examples of *Version II*. When traditional arithmetic is restored, all the Cambodian chronicles, including *Version II*, have, for their early dates, the same rigid animal-year periodization of *Nong* and *Liste*, even when the absolute year dates are quite different.

²⁰ For a good example of traditional arithmetic see the chronology of *Nong*, in Thai translation, PP, Vol I; and for an illustration of possible confusion of the two systems see my review of van Vliet.

This means that either *Version II* was an expansion of the basic *Nong* framework, or vice-versa. Certain features of *Version II* seem to show that it is later. Other features in *Nong* show that two of its periods had probably been expanded from *Liste*, and the sequence of composition would have been *Liste-Nong-Version II*. This will perhaps be clearer if shown schematically.

Event	Liste	Nong	Version II corrected
Nippean Bat		1346	1346
Invasion I		1352-3	1352
Invasion II		1372-3	
Ponhea Yat		1373	
Nippean Bat	1382		
Invasion I	1388-[9]		
Invasion II	1408-9		1408
Ponhea Yat	1409		1409
Yat abdication		1433	
Thommoreachea birth		1447	1444
Ponhea Yat abdication	1457		1455
Ponhea Yat death			[1459]
Thomm-, throne	1468	1468	1465
Damkhat birth		1473	1473
Thomm-, death	1504	1504	1504

Version II corrected means, of course, with traditional arithmetic restored. For some dates in the fifteenth century this does not produce exactly the old animal-year pattern, due apparently to arbitrary changes made by the chroniclers. Certain details of the other chronicles are omitted from the much briefer *Liste*. The interesting points here are that *Version II* agrees with *Nong* for its first entries, then agrees with *Liste* for the second invasion and subsequent events, and all three texts begin to coincide from the end of the fifteenth century, a time when most historians agree that the chronicles start to show a fair degree of accuracy. It would seem, then, that the first purpose in the composition of *Version II* was to reconcile the differing dates for Thai invasions found in *Liste* and *Nong* by adopting one from each.

The clue that *Nong* is later than *Liste* lies in the data concerning Thommoreachea. According to *Nong* he was born in 1447 when his father, Ponhea Yat, would have been at least eighty-nine years old (assuming him to have been at least fifteen when he took power after the second invasion). Furthermore, this would have been fourteen years after Ponhea Yat's abdication. *Liste* does not provide such details, but if Thommoreachea's birth date be

assumed either true, or a tradition dating from the earliest chronicle, it fits better into *Liste's* chronology. Thus 1447 would have been ten years before Yat's abdication when his age would have been in the sixties. *Version II's* evidence also suggests that *Nong's* birth date and *Liste's* abdication date are the original data, and in all of its texts says that Yat died four years after abdication, something which, if inserted into *Nong* would make the birth date of that tradition impossible. I suggest, therefore, that *Nong's* chronology was expanded from that of *Liste* by lengthening the reign of Yat — and also a period of trouble in the reigns following Yat — but the birth date of Thommoreachea was not adjusted.

This conclusion is contrary to the standard synthesis, which has accepted the *Nong* dates as the best for the beginning of the story and an invasion shortly after the 1351 founding of Ayudhya. It also implies that *Ang Eng*, even though dating from earlier than *Nong*, was not the oldest tradition, but that *Liste* had been composed even earlier. Before going on with this, it is useful to return to the Ayudhyan chronicles.

Here too it was necessary to find some explanation for the various chronologies as whole, related systems, but there is no rigid animal-year pattern as in the Cambodian chronicles, and it was not possible to attribute different chronologies to traditional versus modern arithmetic. The key proved to be the detailed dates found in the chronicles in quantity from the early sixteenth century, and which include day of the week, day of the waxing or waning moon, month and year. The startling thing was that although the year dates of LP and 1157 for identical events differ, the other elements of the dates are generally the same, something which in true chronology would happen only rarely. What is even more astonishing is that between 1584 and 1586 (LP), a time span covered by the 1145 fragment whose dates differ from 1157 by one year, the year dates of 1157(P) and RA also differ, and for several events there are three or four different year dates, all with identical day and month dates, an impossible circumstance. For example, the last dated event of 1145, part of a battle with the Burmese, is recorded in all four texts as 'Thursday, second of the waning moon, second month, in 1586(LP), 1569(RA), 1577(P), and 1576(1145). It is clear from this that certain chronicles had copied from others, altering the years, but leaving the other elements of the dates as in the original.

The favoured candidate for the original is LP due to its date of composition and concordance with external evidence, and checking by well-known methods shows that its dates are generally coherent internally in terms of the traditional calendrical system.²¹ The early entries of 1157 are also in nearly

²¹ See F.G. Faraut, *L'Astronomie Cambodgienne* (Phnom-Penh, [Saigon, Imprimerie F.H. Scheider], 1910); and *Presence du Laos, France-Asie* (Saigon) Nos. 118-20 (1956) pp. 787-814.

verbatim agreement, except for dates, with the corresponding passages of LP. Altogether this is sufficient proof that the 1157 tradition was based on LP, and even more interesting is that when comparative tables of dated events are set up, it is seen that 1157 includes dates coherent only in terms of LP, but not found in that text, a circumstance proving that extant LP derives from an earlier, and fuller, chronicle. Thus for an investigation of true history only the LP dates and events plus the events of 1157 missing from extant LP need be considered. The reason for the erroneous 1157 chronology, as Prince Damrong suggested, was a scribal accident, probably during the composition of 1145, which resulted first in a twelve-year cyclical error at the end of the sixteenth century, then further tinkering to account for explicit thirteen-month years, and a gradual lessening of the difference so that the opening dates of 1351 for the founding of Ayudhya could be maintained.²²

There still remains the question of the extra entries for Cambodia, the main textual difference between LP and 1157. Were they inserted only in the eighteenth century, or were they part of the original LP tradition which was dropped from the extant LP text? Close study of the text of each such entry shows, in some cases, anachronisms which give away the fact of late insertion or clues that the elements of the story have been lifted from other times or places. Attention here must be limited to those passages which have a direct bearing on the mutual relationships in the composition and transmission of the Thai and Cambodian chronicles.

The most important are the two extra invasions of 1157. The first of these falls between 1351 and 1353 in the reign of Ramathibodi I, and it has generally been agreed that it is the same story as that recorded in the sixteenth century *Jinakalamali*, which relates campaigns of Ramathibodi and his relative, the Suphanburi prince, in 'Kamboja'. Coedès and Wolters assumed Kamboja to be Cambodia, but more recent research has led to the conclusion that Kamboja was central Siam.²³ Thus *Jinakalamali* does not speak of Cambodia at all, but by the end of the eighteenth century the old meaning of 'Kamboja' had been forgotten, or was deliberately distorted, and a campaign which in *Jinakalamali*, and probably in fact, involved central Siam, was displaced to Cambodia. The alternative explanation, that *Jinakalamali* and 1157 describe true and separate events, would involve too many movements to be plausible.

²² Prince Damrong's suggestion in RA, p. 399, only concerned the cyclical error. The rest is my own interpretation.

²³ G. Coedès, 'Documents sur l'histoire politique et religieuse du Laos occidental', *BEFEO*, 25 (1925) pp. 99-100; Wolters, 'Basan', pp. 80-1; Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1976) pp. 62-6; A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, 'Epigraphic and Historical Studies', *JSS*, 61, ii (1973) pp. 107-09.

As for the second invasion of 1157, which falls sometime between 1384 and 1387 in that text, but if inserted in the LP chronology would come between 1388 and 1395, its story contains serious anachronisms — such as, for example, Vietnamese intervention — which are not plausible before the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, and it follows immediately a campaign against Chiang Mai which is also absent from all other traditions, contains anachronisms, and even for event parallels a later, real campaign in the north. It is thus virtually certain that this passage is a late insertion due perhaps to accidental displacement of the Chiangmai campaign which at its true, early seventeenth century, date was followed by intervention in Cambodia.²⁴

Having stated this much about the chronicles of Ayudhya, we may return again to the Cambodian texts. With the artificial character of the initial reign sequence fairly certain, it was necessary to examine the textual matter for clues to its composition. The first significant detail appears in the Thai translation of *Nong*, in which a phrase incomprehensible in modern Thai and Cambodian, and referring to the 'auspicious moment', accompanies the entry for Nippeon Bat, the first king, but is not associated with any other king until the coronation of Ang Chan in mid-fifteenth century, after which it is included with the coronation of most kings until 1738. A few meaningless relics of this phrase are preserved in *Nong* proper, indicating that the full phrase was in the *Nong* archetype, and was copied in full in the text sent to the Thai court and in fragmentary fashion into the extant Cambodian *Nong*. Since this phrase as it stands is corrupt, it was probably not completely understood by the mid-nineteenth century copyists and translators, but since other standardized phrases with the same meaning continued to accompany coronations in later chronicles, the pattern of occurrences of this phrase in the Thai *Nong* indicates that there had been a pre-*Nong* chronicle which was written, and ended, not long after 1738.

The second key detail is in the preamble of *Nong*. There it is said that an older chronicle ending in the reign of the king's grandfather, which would have been in the middle of the eighteenth century, had been lost, and this was the reason for writing a new one, the chronicle known as *Nong*. Thus the existence of a pre-*Nong* text is explicitly affirmed.

²⁴ The analysis to prove this is rather long and will appear in my dissertation. Briefly, the Chiangmai campaign is detailed in 1157 at the date 1588, which should be revised to 1600 to fit the LP chronological scheme. This second date is a rat year, like 1384 of the misplaced campaign, and the leader of the Ayudhyan forces, Ekathotsarot, was really named Ramesuon like the king in 1384, a fact which probably was not known to the 18th and 19th century writers. Wood was convinced that the early Chiangmai passage was misplaced, and Prince Damrong agreed that it was suspect, but neither provided an explanation.

Finally, in *Nong*, after the destruction of Lovek in 1593-1594, there is a statement that, 'thus ends the chronicle of the kings of Lovek', that is, the first part of *Nong*. However, the first king to reside in Lovek, according to the chronicles, was Ang Chan, and the phrase would imply a section of the chronicle extending from his reign to the fall of Lovek. Plausible inferences from these three details are that: (1) a pre-*Nong* chronicle ended in mid-eighteenth century and included in the opening statement about each reign a stock phrase concerning 'the auspicious moment', (2) this pre-*Nong* chronicle, or another pre-*Nong* version, had begun its story with the first king reigning in Lovek, Ang Chan, and (3) since the 'auspicious' phrase is missing from the time of Nippean Bat to the reign of Ang Chan, a period of about 200 years, and including important kings such as Ponhea Yat, one should consider the possibility that Nippean Bat originally belonged in the sixteenth century and had been displaced.

With this in mind two relatively neglected sixteenth century inscriptions, one at Angkor Wat and one in Kompong Cham, show an unexpected relevance. The first refers to a king who achieved Nirvana (*nibbana*) in 1566, while the second concerns a king *maha parama nibbanapada*, the date of whose death is also recorded as 1566. These two inscriptions clearly refer to the same individual, who must be the 'Ang Chan' of the chronicles, and whose true, perhaps posthumous, title included the term *nibbanapada*/Nippean Bat given to the first king in the chronicles. The hypothesis that Nippean Bat is Ang Chan is thus reinforced.

New possibilities then appear for the analysis of the texts. I showed earlier that the order of composition seemed to be *Liste-Nong-Version II*, with AE, because of its opening date, apparently part of the *Nong* stage. However, AE is in more than one respect anomalous. Some of its personal names are impossible, and others unlikely for Cambodian rulers. At one point there is thematic doubling in its narrative, and some of the geographical details are impossible in the interpretation given them by Coedès and Wolters. *Liste, Nong*, and *Version II*, whether true or not, are at least plausible in all of these respects. AE, then, from this point of view, appears like a sketch of an entirely new version of history which was cleaned up and made more acceptable by the later texts.

If we take AE as just a preliminary sketch, and keep in mind the possibility that Nippean Bat has been displaced, a number of points take on new significance. First, there is the opening date of AE and *Nong*, 1346, at which time, according to AE, King Ramathibodi was ruling in Ayudhya. According to the Ayudhyan chronicles, however, Ramathibodi did not establish his capital at Ayudhya until 1351, and some traditions deny explicitly that he was there as early as 1346. The relevant passage of AE in its entirety says: 'In *saka* era 1268 [1346], year of the dog, 8th of the decade, Samtec Brah Mahanibhar was reigning at Sri Sodara, the capital [rajadhani] At that

time S.B. Ramadhipati, son of S.B. Mahacakrabarti rajadhiraja was reigning in Ayudhya'.²⁵ With respect to Ayudhya, not only the date is anomalous, but also the name of Ramathibodi's father, since, although there are many traditions about the family, none of them identify the father in this manner.²⁶

If we imagine, however, that Nippean Bat/Mahanibhar might be Ang Chan, we find that AE's opening phrase is more apt for the sixteenth century than for the fourteenth. The detail, '8th of the decade', also fits the dog year 1448/1526 when Ang Chan defeated the rebel, Kan, and effectively assumed power in Cambodia; and a careful look at Ayudhyan history shows that the king there in 1526 was Ramathibodi/Ramadhipati II, son of the king known to the chronicles as Trailokanath, but whose true contemporary titles included the terms *parama cakrabarttirajadhiraja*.²⁷ Also of interest is the name of the Cambodian capital in AE's opening sentence. 'Sri Sodara', probably derives from the classical name for Angkor, *Yasodharapura*, which was passed on to later capitals, but in only one of them did the form 'Sri Sodara' (pron. /sothor, sodor/) stick as its principal name. This was in the district near Kompong Cham which is now called Srei Santhor, was known to the sixteenth century Portuguese as 'Sistor', and is very near where Ang Chan would have been in 1526. It is also the general area of the inscription of 1566 which probably marks his funerary monument. Moreover, AE uses this name only once, in the opening sentence quoted above. Thereafter the Cambodian capital is named 'Brah Nagar' or 'Nagara Hlvan', of which the latter is the traditional Thai name for Angkor, and this further supports the idea that AE's opening has been taken out of another context.

Other Ang Chan parallels now force themselves onto our attention. In AE, as in nearly all the other chronicles, Nippean Bat is given a five-year reign which, beginning in a dog year, puts his death, by traditional arithmetic, in a tiger year. Ang Chan also began his effective reign, by destroying Kan, in a dog year and died in a tiger year, even though the period in between was forty-one rather than five years. The second king in AE has an eleven-year reign, as did Ang Chan's sixteenth century successor, and the name of AE's third king is Garu (pron. /khru/), which has exactly the same meaning as the name of the next sixteenth century ruler, Sattha (teacher). The explanation of the next specified reigns of AE in terms of parallels is too lengthy for the space allotted here, but I think the reader will admit that there is already sufficient evidence for a strong presumption that AE's fourteenth century history was compiled with an eye on sixteenth century records.

²⁵ Coedes, 'Essai', p. 24. My translation.

²⁶ Several of these traditions have been collected by Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya*, chap. iv.

²⁷ M. Vickery, 'The Khmer Inscriptions of Tenasserim: A Reinterpretation', *JSS*, 61, 1 (1973) pp. 51-70.

AE's structure is equally interesting from a slightly different point of view.²⁸ As Wolters realized in 'Basan', Khmer chroniclers probably gave great importance to animal-year synchronisms, and when tinkering with history, probably maintained such relationships. We have already noted such a correspondence between Nippean Bat and Ang Chan. Now if it is true, as I suggest, that fourteenth century history is simply sixteenth century history moved backwards, one would expect to find a parallel between important sixteenth century events, such as the invasion in 1593-1594 and one or another of the invasions recorded for the fourteenth century in AE and other texts.

The later, true, invasion, against the Cambodian capital Lovek, occurred in 1593, a snake year. Although AE supplies no dates, textual exegesis seems to place its second invasion between 1388 and 1390, of which 1389 was also a snake year.²⁹ In the sixteenth century Ang Chan, although taking power in 1526, was not crowned until 1553, a bull year, and he died in 1566. A parallel bull year for Nippean Bat would have been 1349, also mid-way between the opening of his reign and his death. In each case the bull year is forty years before the snake-year invasions of 1389 and 1593. This preoccupation with Ang Chan parallels, if true, would explain why AE begins with a date and reference which contradict the Ayudhya chronicles — the reign of Ang Chan/Nippean Bat, displaced, had to fall near the basic date of 1350-1351 for Ayudhya's foundation and the same length of time before a snake-year Thai invasion as had been the case in the sixteenth century.

Another interesting parallel concerns the first seven reigns of AE, the lengths of which are specified. Added up by traditional arithmetic they reach a date of pig year 1371 for the first Thai invasion, even though the text says it was a cock year, which can only be 1369. This latter date, and the details of the event, are due to misinterpretation of events occurring in Ayudhya, but misplaced in Cambodia.³⁰ The implied date 1371, though, would at first appear to be due to scribal error, but then the combined evidence of LP and a sixteenth century inscription produces another parallel. These two sources show a Thai attack on Lovek in 1587, apparently only partly successful.³¹ Now pig

²⁸ If I go into what may seem to be excessive detail in the analysis of AE, it is because this text proves to be the key to the composition of all the Cambodian chronicles for the period mid-14th to mid-16th centuries.

²⁹ Wolters, 'Basan', also placed AE's second invasion in this time period, but his procedure, which involved the use of Chinese sources, is different from mine. As I see it, the Chinese sources provide nothing which may legitimately be used as evidence for a Thai invasion.

³⁰ See above, p. 141 and n. 23. This passage in question in *Jinakalamali* is undated and could be interpreted as occurring at almost any time in the reign of Ramathibodi I (1351-1369). AE was probably influenced as well by a text of the *Sangitiyavamsa*/van Vliet tradition, which remained familiar in Cambodia longer than in Siam, and in the Pali versions of which the Suphanburi prince is given the name *khun lumban-u*, in which one may discern the origin of the name of the Khmer king Lambang.

³¹ The inscription is No. K. 27, from Anlok, never satisfactorily edited. For a published reference see B.P. Groslier, *Angkor et le Cambodge au XVIe Siècle* (Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1958).

year 1371 is twenty-one years after the death of Nippean Bat, and 1587, also a pig year, is twenty-one years after the death of Ang Chan. Thus both the invasions of AE (1371, 1389) (although eighteen years apart, by this reckoning, rather than six) seem to have been designed to parallel events of the sixteenth century and time spans related to Ang Chan. The reason for the confusing double date for AE's first invasion (1369, 1371) is that when the sixteenth century events and time spans had been displaced to the fourteenth century, the chronicler believed that Ayudhyan texts which he was using for reference related a true episode in Cambodia in 1369, and some mention of it had to be included.

But what about LP's invasion in 1431? If it is true, why was it ignored by AE? Before going on to this point, more textual parallels in AE must be noted.

Following the second invasion in AE, as well as in all the other Cambodian chronicles, a prince named Yat drives out the Thai and restores the kingdom. After a rather long reign he is followed by a son, Naray/Noreay, and then by a period of conflict among three princes, Srei Reachea, Sodaiya/Soriyotey (‘*surya-udaya*’), and Thommoreachea, out of which the last emerges triumphant. His son is the sixteenth century Ang Chan whose existence, with the title ‘Nippean Bat’, is confirmed by epigraphy. This series of events in the other chronicles has always appeared so straightforward that no doubt has ever been cast on its basically factual character. However, AE shows some divergence in its details, both as to chronology and relationships among the protagonists, and we are thus faced with two traditions, both of which might be modifications of an older archetype. Because of this neither may be assumed true, and some doubt is cast on the events of the period.

As soon as this is realized it is possible to find a series of parallels which demonstrate conclusively the fictional character of AE's history. After the true invasion of Lovek in 1593-94, there was within a few years a restoration under King Soriyoppear, whose coronation titles are exactly those given by the chronicles to Yat. He was followed by a son, Chey Chettha, who ordered that he be addressed as ‘Naray’, and this ‘Naray’ was followed by a son, Thommoreachea II, who was in conflict with an uncle known both as Outey (*udaya*) and Phra Reachea. There was also at this time another prince, Tian, an alternate name given by AE to Sodaiya.³² The rest of the details of the AE account are found in the career of Thommoreachea III and IV, father and son, about a century later. Thommoreachea III was also the son of another Chey Chettha, which

³² See Nong, Thai trans.; PP, I, pp. 207-10; N. Gervaise, *Histoire Naturelle et Politique du Royaume de Siam* (Paris, C. Barin, 1688) pp. 257-80; H. Muller (ed.), *De Oost-Indische Compagnie in Cambodja en Laos* (s-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1917) pp. 11-14; F. Pallu, *Relation des missions des eveques francais au royaume du Siam* (Paris, Charles Angot, 1682) pp. 365-73. For Thommoreachea III and IV, see PP, Vol. I, pp. 216-31; D.P. Chandler, ‘An Eighteenth Century Inscription from Angkor Wat’, *JSS*, 59, ii (1971) pp. 151-60.

helps account for the conflation, and was also in conflict for a long time with his relatives. At the very beginning of his reign, and before his coronation, he was in conflict with a group of Karen/Samre in the Pursat region, which is precisely the situation of Thommoeachea I at the point where AE breaks off its narrative. During the same long period of conflict Thommoeachea IV, supporting his father, made friends with the 'forest people' (AE's Kuy) from above the Dangrek mountains, and among their opponents in the conflict was another prince Outey (*udaya*). Finally Thommoeachea III and IV were restored to power with Thai aid, just like Thommoeachea I in *Nong* after the story of AE is broken off.

Chronological details serve to clinch the argument, and are presented on the following page in a table which includes all the parallels which have been discussed. AE's only datum for the post-invasion period is twenty-five years for the reign of Naray, but we may assume the second invasion to have been calculated for 1389 and the death of Thommoeachea I, for the chronicler, to have been in 1504, since all traditions concur on this point. Brackets indicate data either implied or interpolated, but not stated in the texts, and all time spans are indicated in traditional arithmetic. Proper names are abbreviated.³³

What the procedure behind this table has involved, then, is first the observation that in a certain period of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in which individuals with identical names and performing identical acts as in *Liste* and AE $\pm$ 200 years earlier, also acted within time spans which, with one exception, were identical to *Liste*. This exception is the sole chronological datum of AE. It was then assumed that these time periods were part of the structure intended by AE's compiler, and they were interpolated, with the result that AE, in spite of beginning at a different date and having one explicit datum which differs, ultimately coincides with *Liste*. *Nong*, in spite of certain differences, also fits the same larger pattern.

The first seventeenth century parallel is the bull year restoration of Soriyopear, as in *Liste* and *Nong*. This is not found in AE, but there the end of Yat's reign, implied in a snake year, fits the Soriyopear pattern. The twenty-five years of AE's Naray find their seventeenth century parallel, not in Chey Chettha/Naray's true reign, but in the total period between his return from exile in Siam and his death. The 'true' date of his return is not absolutely certain. Different texts place it between 1601 and 1607, resulting in a period of between twenty-one and twenty-eight years. The date of 1603 is found in some texts, and is suggested by the most detailed for this period, and I think it safe to impute it to AE's compiler. The remaining periods of *Liste* and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are exact parallels; even *Nong*'s thirty-two

³³ AC — Ang Chan, NB — Nippean Bat, BR — Borom Reachea, CC — Chey Chetta, Sor — Soriyopear, Thomm — Thommoeachea.

16th - 18th Century	Ang Eng	Liste	Nong
AC reign '8th of decade'	NB reign '8th of decade'	[NB reign 1346]	1346
AC crowned	[NB crowned 1349]	[NB crowned 1349]	[1349]
AC death	NB death	NB death	1350
BR 1566-1576 Sathha 'teacher'	Reign II Garu 'teacher'	11 years	tiger
Invasion	Invasion	[1371 pig]	
Invasion	Invasion	[1389 snake]	1353
Sor	Yat	[1389]	1373
CC return	Yat's reign	49 years	1373
Sor abdicated	Yat death	1457	61 years
CC period	Naray reign	5 years	1433
Thomm II reign and conflict	Thomm I	1461	5 years
Thomm III	Conflict, end of AE	Conflict	1437
		Thomm I	32 years
		Thomm I	1468
		Thomm I	1468
		9 years	9 years
		1476	1476
Thomm III death Age 57 at death 1707-1747	Thomm I death	1504	1504
	1468-1504	37 years	Age 58

years for a time of troubles, made necessary by the compression at the beginning of that text, finds a parallel in the ultimately successful struggle of Thommoreachea III with his relatives between 1707 and 1738. The place where the parallels finally break down is where the period of Thommoreachea I, based on that of Thommoreachea III, had to end at the possibly true date of 1504 on which all the traditions agree.

These multiple parallels in name, time period and animal-year can leave no doubt, I feel, about the artificial character of AE's story, and we see that what AE has done is in fact to telescope events of its fourteenth century, formed by setting back Ang Chan, and true events of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which are themselves a conflation of two periods. This telescoping accounts for (1) the absence of all reference to LP's 1431, since the entire fifteenth-sixteenth century period is missing; (2) the length of Yat's reign, which differs among the traditions, and is nothing more than the residual connection between the artificial 1389, 1409, or 1373, and a series of transplanted events which had to end in 1504; (3) the absence of detailed chronological data from AE. Its writer knew perfectly well what he was doing — making an initial sketch of an entirely new history, which would still require more working out.

It is not, however, necessary to accuse the AE writer of conscious falsification. The Cambodian literati at that time were steeped in Thai language and literature; they had, apparently, no records of their own past before the sixteenth century, except possibly the story of Ponhea Yat; their popular traditions were dateless; and they could well have imagined that the Ayudhyan version was better history and had to be imitated. The absence of dates in AE and the play on certain names, such as Garu/Sattha, show the writer's awareness of the problems and his embarrassment that the Cambodian data did not permit the desired corrections without considerable manipulation.

The further working out of the scheme is found in *Liste* and *Nong*. Since none of the chronicles say Nippean Bat was crowned at any certain date, only that he was reigning, *Liste* could very well have accepted that Nippean Bat's reign had begun in AE's dog year 1346 and continued for forty years, like that of Ang Chan, until his death in 1386. Thus the Ang Chan parallels are still active, but interpreted in a slightly different way, and the three-cycle difference between *Liste* and the other texts is accounted for. *Liste*'s date of 1388-89 for the first, rather than second, invasion may have come from AE or directly from the parallel with Ang Chan. Its date of 1409 for the second war could have come from an acceptance of AE's implied twenty-year time span (1369-1389), and it also enhances the Yat-Soriyopear parallel, by placing the beginning of both reigns in bull years. The reign of Naray then had to be

shortened in order to keep the total chronology within the same limits. *Nong* was the next stage, and its chronology has been compressed in one place and stretched in others. The date for its first invasion must have been borrowed from the Ayudhyan 1157 chronicle, which made AE's explicit date of 1346 for Nippan Bat again necessary. The date of its second invasion was due simply to the acceptance of the twenty-year interwar interval already established by its predecessors.

Version II still appears as an attempt to reconcile *Nong* and *Liste*, and the two chronologies beginning in 1466 and 1394, which I rejected above, resulted, in the first case, from an attempt to synchronize some of the displaced details with passages of the 1157 chronicle while mechanically retaining the *Nong* time periods, and in the second from the same procedure plus a desire to begin the whole story as close as possible to the mid-fourteenth century dates of the older traditions.

The first 150 years of Cambodia's post-Angkor history are thus entirely artificial and the reason must have been to imitate the Ayudhyan chronicles, of which new versions had been prepared just before the date attributed to AE, and to make Cambodia's written history as long as that of its neighbour. The procedure adopted shows that no true records had been preserved.³⁴

The general conclusion of this investigation so far is that LP, the earliest but one of the extant texts, was composed from true records, all the other Ayudhyan chronicles, except *Sangitiyavamsa/van Vliet* and 2/k. 125 derive from it, and the Cambodian chronicles for the period between 1346 and the early sixteenth century were composed artificially under the influence of the new chronicles of Ayudhya. We must now go back to the main concern of this essay to ask why the chronicles were written and what they tell us about their authors' views of the past.

LP seems to show a concern with the preservation of factual history, a concern which does not appear in Siam again until the nineteenth century. The question which must be asked is, why such a concern appeared at that time, and only then. Let us leave this for a moment and go on with the other texts.

Since they were almost all copied from earlier chronicles, and included spurious passages along with arbitrary, and often careless, alteration of dates, there must have been some purpose other than the careful preservation of information about the past. In the case of the first versions of 1157, it has long been accepted that they were part of the general programme of restoration undertaken by Rama I, and it could be argued that they resulted from a hasty collection, recopying and synthesis of older texts. Likewise, the 1136 and 1145 fragments were probably part of Taksin's restoration, and the shift from a true to an erroneous chronology may suggest that the physical existence of the texts was more important than careful examination of their contents.

³⁴ In addition to the artificial structure illustrated here, it can be demonstrated that none of the royal names between Nippan Bat and Yat are genuine.

The composition of a new chronicle as part of a restoration may also be suggested as the impulse for the writing of *Nong*, for Ang Chan III came to the throne in 1806 when Cambodia had been without a king for ten years, and such could easily have been the reason for the chronicle attributed to the reign of Ang Duong.³⁵ What I have identified above as the 'pre-*Nong*' chronicle also appears to have ended with the princes who effected a restoration in the middle of the eighteenth century after a very long period of exile, dynastic conflict, and breakdown of the central government, for at that point the text goes into great detail about all surviving members of the royal family, as though summing up just before the end of the story. The same is true of the *1170 Fragment*, which is the chronicle of Soriyopear, who effected a major restoration after the Thai conquest of Lovek and an ensuing period of instability. It includes, besides a chronicle proper, the royal ceremonies for the twelve months of the year, and a section which looks very much like a palatine law. AE's main purpose as a sketch of a new version of fourteenth century has been described, but through telescoping it brings the story up to what is really mid-eighteenth century, and may originally have continued on to the reign of Ang Enghimself, whose enthronement also represented a restoration.

There is thus strong evidence that all the chronicles written before and in the first half of the nineteenth century, except LP, *Sangitiyavamsa/van Vliet*, and 2/k. 125, the last of which is too fragmentary to judge, were written as parts of royal restorations, and were therefore perhaps considered as elements of the regalia. This suggestion, chronicles as regalia, has already been put forward with respect to the Lao and Javanese chronicles,³⁶ and the 1903 preface to the latest official Cambodian chronicle states expressly that:

the royal chronicles which the kings had made in former times are defective. The people who copied them deviated and made many mistakes. They did not think to arrange dates in the proper order. From now on the dynasty of kings ruling in Cambodia will decline because the dates are confused and the reigns are not in the proper order.³⁷

³⁵ The reference to such a chronicle, now lost, is in Norodom's 1903 preface, to be discussed below.

³⁶ Charles Archaimbault, 'Les annales de l'ancien royaume de S'ienk Khwang', *BEFEO*, 53, ii (1967) pp. 557-674, esp. 557, 561.

³⁷ This preface was among the papers conserved in the palace in Phnom Penh in 1971. Since the 1903 commission did not complete its work, apparently due to Norodom's death, and the text which ultimately saw the day was the work of another commission set up in 1913, this preface was not included in the final work.

It was to prevent such a fate that the new chronicle was to be written. There is no evidence whether Norodom's exhortation was due to French criticism of Cambodian chronicles or to examination of conflicting versions by the Cambodians themselves, but in any case, the scribes did little more than copy, sometimes poorly, the extant earlier chronicles, only adding more details from oral traditions in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries. Thus, the primary purpose of the chronicle begun in 1903 and continued in 1913, appears not historical, but magical, as one of the objects the correct construction of which was necessary for the well-being of the royalty, even though there was no question of a restoration at that time.³⁸

There is also a strong possibility that Prasat Thong saw himself as a restorer, and that the chronicle which was the basis for van Vliet's translation, which clearly was not composed from accurate archival records, and which has the peculiar feature of making Angkor a creation of the first king of Ayudhya, was designed as part of this aspect of his reign. It is necessary to remember, and I think to emphasize, that the kings who ruled in Ayudhya from the Burmese conquest in 1569 to Prasat Thong were in a sense outsiders. They were of the royal family of Sukhothai — displaced by Ayudhya in the mid-fifteenth century — who recovered their ancestral principality in 1549 and, through aid to the Burmese, in 1569 were given the throne of Ayudhya. In this connection it is striking that in van Vliet the first of these kings, Maha Thammaracha, is given an exceedingly 'bad press'.

Prasat Thong himself was an archaizer who looked back to the mixed Khmer-Thai tradition of pre-1569 Ayudhya. He had the plan of Angkor Wat copied and used it as the basis for two buildings constructed in his reign, one of which was, 'the first Prang to have been built — at least in Ayudhya itself — for two hundred years';³⁹ he proposed giving the classical name of Angkor, Yasodhara, to one of his palaces; and the laws which may be attributed to his reign suggest that he tried to abandon the essentially Burmese *cula* era for the *saka* era used in Cambodia and pre-1569 Ayudhya.⁴⁰

The only one of the whole collection of extant Ayudhyan and Cambodian chronicles, then, which cannot reasonably be attributed to the need for regalia in conjunction with a restoration is LP, and I can only surmise that its unique concern with historical fact may have been due to foreign influences, European

³⁸ But Norodom could well have felt at that time that the dynasty faced a major crisis.

³⁹ H.W. Woodward, Jr., 'The Art and Architecture of the Ayudhya Period' [*Sinlapakam samay ayudhya*] Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 2514, p. 64.

⁴⁰ See the reign of Prasat Thong in RA or any of the long chronicles of Ayudhya, and the various collections of the 1805 law code, *Kothmay Tra Sam Duong*. Of course, if the *culamani* hypothesis is correct (see D.K. Wyatt, 'The Thai "Kata Mandiarapala" and Malacca', *JSS*, 55, ii [1967] pp. 279-86), none of the extant laws date from Prasat Thong's reign, a conclusion which I doubt most historians of Thailand would accept. The last Ayudhyan document before the 1569 conquest is the Dan Sai inscription of 1563, dated in the *saka* era, and with Thai still written in Khmer script.

and/or Chinese, which found a favourable soil in King Naray's well-known interest in the outside world. The next period of genuine concern with history in Siam, the nineteenth century, was also a time of intense contact with, and interest in, both Europe and China on the part of the Thai royalty and elite.

As for the perceptions of the past held by those kings and scholars who ordered and wrote histories as regalia and who were quite ready to tamper with the record, displacing episodes and entire periods, it would seem to me that the past was something about which they were not unduly concerned, and about which little was preserved for its own sake. Norodom's directions for the composition of a new chronicle in 1903 show that it was the future of his dynasty, not its past, which really concerned him, and Coedès' remark to the effect that official chronicles were stated to have disappeared at a time when copies were still available in temples would seem to show that court chronicles, once written, were put away and neglected until a time of stress again directed attention to them.⁴¹

In spite of this, I think it is possible to discern certain special perceptions behind some of these chronicles as coherent wholes and certain political interests which they were designed to serve; and, as in the narratives discussed by some of my colleagues, these special perceptions and interests can be identified because they conflict with factual information derived from other sources.

The 1157 (1795 A.D.) tradition depicts Ayudhya as the natural centre of a Thai kingdom which had extended its control rapidly over its neighbours from a very early date and which could legitimately claim to be their suzerain. Except for the implications of the Prasat Thong reaction, there is no sign of the Khmer and Mon background of early Ayudhya which recent studies have made prominent and which was important in Ayudhyan elite circles well into the fifteenth century, perhaps even later. Cambodia, which was a major preoccupation of Ayudhyan kings from the end of the sixteenth century well into the nineteenth, and which was held in subjection only with great difficulty before the eighteenth century, appears as a vassal which brought on its own conquest soon after the foundation of Ayudhya and which remained untrustworthy thereafter in spite of generous treatment by Ayudhyan rulers.

The probably spurious passages concerning Cambodia began in Prasat Thong's chronicle (van Vliet), which attributed the founding of Angkor to Ayudhya's first king; and the accounts of fourteenth century conquests were inserted in the time of Taksin and Rama I, both of whom had campaigned in Cambodia and were concerned with reunification of the kingdom within its Ayudhyan boundaries. Accounts of Cambodia's rapid recovery after the invasion of 1593-1594, and the defeat of all Thai attacks in the seventeenth century, are missing, and are known to us from contemporary European reports.

⁴¹ Coedès, 'Essai', p. 23.

Ayudhya's relationships with Sukhothai and Chiang Mai are similarly slanted. Not so long ago historians, working with the chronicles, believed that Sukhothai had been absorbed as early as mid-fourteenth century, but new research on Sukhothai inscriptions combined with careful exegesis of the chronicles, has revealed Sukhothai as an independent kingdom for most of the time until 1438.⁴² As for Chiangmai, it appears as victim of an Ayudhyan conquest in a passage dated 1384 which both Thai and foreign scholars recognize as suspect, and which I would attribute to the revisions of Taksin or Rama I, both of whom made major efforts to absorb the northern kingdom.

The special perceptions of the Cambodian chronicles are not, as one might expect, an argument against the Thai tradition, but its wholesale acceptance. As I have tried to make clear above, the whole tortuous process of revision in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was to force Cambodian records into the Ayudhyan model. The idea of early conquests was accepted; the successful anti-Thai resistance of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, although mentioned, is not emphasized, and the renewed interest of Ang Chan and his successors in Angkor, and their expansion in that direction which we know about from inscriptions, is neglected, even though Ang Chan's successful wars against the Thai are recorded.

Thus, the Cambodian writers accepted that their country had been a weak vassal of the Thai from nearly the beginning of recorded history, and the only special thread I see running through the whole account is a picture of the Cambodian kings who brought the kingdom back together after times of trouble as men who had established a special relationship with the Thai court, and who had received Thai aid in regaining the throne against local opposition. This is true of Ang Chan I, even though he later fought the Thai. It is true of his father Thommoreachea, of Soriyopear in the beginning of the seventeenth century, of the eighteenth century Thommoreachea, and of Ang Eng in the 1790s, even though he himself was a nonentity. It would also be true, in fact, of Ang Duong in the 1840s. Major exceptions to this pattern are Ponhea Yat and Ream/Ram ChoeungPrey, who expelled the Thai after 1594, but the former at least acquired a queen with high Ayudhyan connections, and the latter, who owed nothing at all to the Thai, is treated by the chroniclers almost as a usurper.

Another interesting point about this structure is that it should have been contrary to the interests of Ang Chan III, who had the *Nong* chronicle written, and who was pro-Vietnamese. Was his reason for wanting a new chronicle at that time in order to change its perceptions? If so, he was no more successful than Norodom nearly a century later, and his scribes continued to reproduce the story which was their true history.

⁴² See the series of 'Epigraphical and Historical Studies' by A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara in *JSS*, 56, ii (1968) to the present.

FROM PALACE TO PRINTING PRESS

The following two studies survey the gamut of changes through which historical perceptions have moved, from the chronicles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to nationalist and Marxist writers of our own day. The scope for these papers enables us to see the gradual broadening of the audience for which history was written. The earliest work was designed either for a small royal circle or for religious scholars. The introduction of printing for Southeast Asian languages in the nineteenth century, and of modern education at the beginning of the twentieth, extended the range of readers and the purposes of authors. The remote past continued to be of immediate interest, but the sacral concerns of early court writers were undermined by the 'secular' spirit of Western historiography, and the needs of a new type of national pride.

THAI HISTORIOGRAPHY FROM ANCIENT TIMES TO THE MODERN PERIOD

Charnvit Kasetsiri

Introduction

The writing of history is probably among the oldest tasks of the Thai intellectual class. In the past, this was centred around the *sangha* (Buddhist Order) and the Royal Court. Monks, princes and noblemen performed this duty because they were the most learned and literate members of society. In short, ancient Thai historiography was very much confined to a small group of people. Not until the mid-nineteenth century did a great change in historical writing take effect and Thai history took on new features. This paper intends to give an over-view of the writing of Thai history from the fifteenth century to the modern period. It will discuss various types of historical writings – the *tamnan*, the *phongsawadan* and the *prawatsat* – terms which have been frequently used to describe the past. *Tamnan* means story, legend or myth. *Phongsawadan* is derived from two Pali words, *vamsa* and *avatara*, and means the history or annals of members of a line, dynasty or kingdom. The last is *prawatsat* (Pali: *pravati* and *sattha*) which is now equivalent to history.

With these three historical concepts we may pursue the recording of the Thai past. By surveying Thai historical documents the writing of history could be divided into three main categories. The first, *tamnan*, is concerned with history as it relates to Buddhism; the second, *phongsawadan*, is mainly the history of dynasties; and the last, *prawatsat*, is modern history writing, emphasizing the concept of the nation-state.

*The Tamnan History*¹

In general, *tamnan* history begins at the point when the Gotama Buddha made a vow to reach enlightenment. This was the time in the distant past before many of the Buddha's reincarnations and before he had accumulated all the merit required to become the Buddha. The *Jinakalamalipakaranam*, written in 1517, gives a very clear statement of the *tamnan* concept of time and space. It says that 'For therein, the Epoch of the Conqueror means the time as far as the lineal succession of the Dispensation commencing with the time of the aspiration of our Teacher, the Exalted One Gotama; and it is of

¹ This discussion on the *tamnan* and *phongsawadan* histories is taken mostly from my book, *The Rise of Ayudhya: A History of Siam in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1976).

divers aspects'.² The history then continues with the career of the Buddha, how he reached enlightenment and how he taught his law, the *dhamma*. After the death of the Buddha the history discusses various world Buddhist councils which took place in India and Sri Lanka. It also emphasizes the role of the great Indian king Asoka in the promotion of Buddhism. Afterwards, the history deals with the events which occurred when Buddhism finally came to Thailand. The 'real history' of Thailand begins at this point. Various kings and kingdoms are portrayed, with the focus being on their role in supporting the religion. It is usually agreed in these documents that the kingdom under discussion will remain the centre of religion until the year 5,000 from the time of the Buddha's death.

In this perspective, then, the past begins in time immemorial, includes the course of the Buddha's career and continues to the point when Buddhism reaches Thailand. The present is 'real history' when kings take on the responsibility of promoting religion. The future stretches from the point where the kings establish Buddhism up to the year 5,000 after the death of the Buddha. Here *tamnan* history ends, for it is the history of the religion of the Gotama Buddha. However, another history goes forward from this point. The Buddha, before entering *nibbana*, made a prediction that after him, when the human life span had become 80,000 years, another Buddha named Metteya would be born. This means that a new history would begin as the story of another Buddha's religion.

The main theme of *tamnan* history is clearly religion and it is the Gotama Buddha who is the moving force in it. Its purpose is to describe the development of Buddhism. Kings and kingdoms come into the picture in so far as their actions contribute to promoting Buddhism. History in this sense is concerned not only with the past. The past is continuous with the existence of the present and the present is also part of the future. Thus the past, the present and the future are parts of one whole, the history of Buddhism. They all have their role in the life of the religion which is a single stretch of time. It is interesting to see that in this type of history, events occur within one single unit. It is the Buddhist tradition, not race or territory or period, which forms this unit. Thai history appears portrayed as part of this Buddhist tradition. Thus some old Thai kingdoms are mentioned as being part of Chomphuthawip (Jambudvīpa), which is generally accepted now as referring to ancient India. One finds a legendary king of Sawankhalok announcing that no man in Chomphuthawip could challenge him.³ Again, one may find the Buddha described as having flown over from India to Chiangmai or Ayudhya during his lifetime. These episodes can be seen as an ancient way of establishing continuity with the original home of Buddhist tradition. They also show that the Thai saw themselves as being part of the

² N.A. Jayawickrama (tr.), *The Sheaf of garlands of the epochs of the conqueror* (London, 1968) p. 2.

³ *Khamhaikan Chao Krungkao* (Bangkok, 1939) p. 30.

larger world which is the world of Buddhism. However, one should not be misled by these fantastic stories of old history. For while history was governed by the law of Buddhism and attempts were made to demonstrate connections between Thailand and old India, it is clear that the ancient historians were aware of the historian's craft. If a Thai kingdom was seen as being part of Chomp-huthawip, it is obvious that they were not regarded as the same place. When the Buddha was said to have roamed around in northern Thailand, he was described as encountering the local people who did not know his language. The ancient historians noted that the Buddha had to speak the language of the local people in order to make himself understood.⁴ In this story not only is a link established between Thailand and the original place of Buddhism, but the distinctiveness of Thailand is also made quite clear.

The *tamnan* view thus is that Buddhism originated in India, but now its centre has moved to a particular kingdom in Thailand. Here is where the religion would continue until its end in the year 5,000 after the death of the Buddha.

One explanation for the nature and concepts of *tamnan* history is that they were due to the dominant role of the Buddhist religion and the type of men who recorded *tamnan* history. It seems that in the early stages of Thai history religious men, whether monks or people who led a different way of life from ordinary laymen, were the most important leaders of the society. Besides monks, other types of religious men were known such as *rusi* (*rsi*), *chipakhao* or *chiphakhao*, and *khru-ba-achan*. The *rusi* was a kind of hermit who dwelt outside the community and practiced mysticism. As for the *chipakhao*, the literary meaning of the word is 'one who wears a white garment'. The *chipakhao* was usually a man who had at one time embraced a strict religious life but could not endure the religious discipline. When he abandoned the full religious life and came out into the lay world, however, he still observed some religious regulations, and therefore led a life which was different from that of the layman on the one hand or the ascetic on the other. As for the *khru-ba-achan*, he was simply a teacher to a large number of people. This kind of teacher had gone through a form of religious education; he might at one time have become a monk or have had an intense educational life with monks. These three types of religious men were the most active leaders of the old society. They had the advantage of higher education and yet they were free from the strict regulation of Buddhism since they no longer remained within the *sangha*.

Tamnan history seems to have declined in the seventeenth century, though it lasted well into the last half of the eighteenth century. A few historical records written according to *tamnan* conception remain from the later period, for example the *Khamhaikan Chao Krungkao* (The Testimony of the People of the Old Capital). This history was taken down in Burma from the oral

⁴ *Tamnan Munlasatsana* (Bangkok, 1939) p. 133.

testimony of Thai prisoners of war who were captured and taken there after the fall of Ayudhya in 1767. It was then translated into Thai at the turn of the present century. Another example of late *tamnan* history is the work described above by Craig Reynolds, written by a leading monk in the reign of King Rama I of Bangkok. The work is an attempt to follow the style of the *tamnan* histories of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries discussed earlier. It is written in Pali and portrays history in the light of Buddhism.⁵ However, it was not seen as a successful historical work and was not highly regarded when it was written because by that time *tamnan* history had been overshadowed by a new type of historiography.

The Phongsawadan History

The second type of Thai history, here called *phongsawadan* history, began some time in the seventeenth century, probably during the reign of King Narai (1657-1688) of Ayudhya. This *phongsawadan* history was the result of changes within Thai society and to a less extent of the contact which the Thai of Ayudhya had with foreigners, especially Europeans. By this time learned men, or literati, were to make their careers at the royal court and were no longer strictly governed by the religious order as in previous days. After a long process of political development, kingship had developed into a powerful autonomous institution which had increasingly taken the cultural initiative from the religious leadership. Therefore, historians were now men who served the court and belonged to it, rather than to the religious Order. The *Phraratchaphongsawadan Krung Si Ayudhya chabap Luang Prasoet* (The Luang Prasoet Chronicle of Ayudhya) of the seventeenth century was written by a royal astrologer, not a monk. Moreover, the language of the new type of history was Thai, a secular and ethnic language, rather than Pali, a religious and international language of the Buddhist world. This is not to say that Buddhism had lost its influence in Thailand, but rather that religion played a different role from that of earlier days. Learned men were still being educated within the monastic Order of Buddhism, but they now served their immediate superior, the king, and not the religion.⁶

Phongsawadan history is that of a dynastic chronicle, primarily emphasizing the activities of kings and kingdoms. It is probably not an exaggeration to say that *phongsawadan* history is the history of a state, as compared to *tamnan* history, the history of religion. This is not to be understood to mean that the Buddhist religion and Buddhist laws which formerly governed *tamnan* history completely lost their influence over the writing of *phongsawadan* history. The

⁵ See entry for *Sangitiyavamsa* in bibliographical appendix.

⁶ At this same period there was a change in Thai education and a new text book was compiled. It is believed that the 17th century textbook *Chindamani* was written for use in instruction as well as for the information of foreign diplomats. See D.K. Wyatt, *The Politics of Reform in Thailand* (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1969) pp. 21-2.

tamnan concept of time and space can still be seen in *phongsawadan* history. The Thai still talked about the end of the time of their religion in the year 5,000, and though the range of history was enlarged to cover a non-Buddhist world, the Buddhist world remained its centre. The primary concern of the *phongsawadan*, however, was to deal with the history of kingdoms and therefore the history of Buddhism as portrayed in *tamnan* was pushed aside.

Phongsawadan histories usually begin with the foundation of a kingdom and then list the activities of successive kings, unlike the *tamnan* histories which begin with the Buddha and have the history of Buddhism as central theme. This new sense of 'kingdomness' can be seen in most of the chronicles written by order of Rama I of Bangkok around A.D. 1800. These chronicles deal with the whole history of Ayudhya from its foundation to its fall, and lead history up to the foundation of the new kingdom of Bangkok. Such *phongsawadan* histories explain the existence of Bangkok as the successor to the fallen kingdom of Ayudhya.

Phongsawadan history was to remain the most important type of Thai historiography from the seventeenth to the middle of the nineteenth century. A great number of *phongsawadan* histories were written during the reign of Rama I (1782-1809). In the second half of the nineteenth century, King Mongkut worked out his *Phraratchaphongsawadan chabap Phraratchahatlekha* (The Royal Autograph Chronicle) which is probably the most important work of the *phongsawadan* history in existence.

From this discussion it can be seen that Thai historiography begins as *tamnan* history in which history is seen in the light of Buddhist religion. The writing of *tamnan* history began well before the fifteenth century and lasted until the end of the eighteenth century. A new product of historiography, the *phongsawadan*, emerged in the seventeenth century and became dominant from around the turn of the eighteenth century. Its influence can be seen until today. *Phongsawadan* history is seen from the point of view of kingship and state. Therefore, one could conclude that the concept of Thai history changed from a religious to a secular and political one.

Prawatsat History

It was in the nineteenth century that the writings of history took a new turn. During this time modern technology was brought from the West into Thailand. The most important factor which contributed to the study of history was the printing press. It is believed that the first printing machine for Thai alphabets was introduced in 1836 by Dr D.B. Bradley, an American missionary. His main purpose for setting up a publishing house was to propagate Christian doctrines. However, he began to publish old historical works such as *Sam Kok* (The Romance of the Three Kingdoms), a Thai translation of a well-known

Chinese story; *Phraratchaphongsawadan Krung Si Ayudhya chabap Somdet Phra Phonrat* (The Somdet Phra Phonrat Chronicle of Ayudhya), sometimes known as 'Dr Bradley Version' or 'Two Volumes Version'; and *Kotmai tra sam duang* (The Three Seals Laws).⁷ The work of Dr Bradley was soon supplemented by that of other missionaries and the Thai elite of the day, thereby providing Thai readers with historical materials which had never been available before. Prince Damrong, a leading historian, mentioned that his interest in reading started at this time when he read *Sam Kok*, published by Dr Bradley.⁸

Moreover, during this period Thai society was faced with the threat of imperialism, primarily from France and England. The presence of the West in Asia had much influence on the thinking of the Thai elite. Thus they began their work of reform, very much along the line of European countries. We can see this change in the reigns of King Mongkut (1851-1868) and to a greater extent, of King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910).⁹ These two kings paid much attention to the field of history during the time of their reform. As one writer put it:

Of the monarchs in the Bangkok period King Mongkut . . . and King Chulalongkorn . . . expressed an especially intense interest in the past at the very moment when internal reform, pressures from the Western powers, and the reactions to Western ideas brought the past into question and thus sharpened historical consciousness.¹⁰

King Mongkut was probably the first man in modern Thailand to become interested in epigraphy after collecting ancient inscriptions and attempting to read them. In 1833 the King found a thirteenth century inscription of Ram Khamhaeng in Sukhothai and moved it down to Bangkok, thereby opening the field of epigraphy which was soon developed further by subsequent foreign and Thai scholars.¹¹ In addition, the King's awareness of the importance of history

⁷ Amphai Chanchira, *Wiwatthanakan Kanphim nangsu nai prathet Thai* (Bangkok, Wannasin, 1973) pp. 88-91; and Kachorn Sukhabanij, *Kaorack khong nangsuphim nai prathet Thai* (Bangkok, n.p., 1966) pp. 5-11. See also C.J. Reynolds, 'The Case of K.S.R. Kulap: A challenge to Royal Historical Writing in late Nineteenth Century Thailand', *JSS*, 61, ii (1973) p. 65.

⁸ Aemon Chaloeprak, 'Prince Damrong Rajanubhap: His Writings and his Contribution to the National Library' (M.A. thesis, Chulalongkorn University, 1968) p. 12.

⁹ See a brief account of Mongkut's reign in A.B. Griswold, *King Mongkut of Siam* (New York, The Asia Society, 1961) ch. 4. For the reform of King Chulalongkorn see, for example, Wyatt; F.W. Riggs, *The Modernization of a Bureaucratic Polity* (Honolulu, East West Center Press, 1966); W.J. Siffin, *The Thai Bureaucracy: Institutional Change and Development* (Honolulu, East West Center Press, 1966).

¹⁰ Reynolds, p. 63.

¹¹ The first volume of this type of work came out in 1924 as *Recueil des Inscriptions du Siam*, Première Partie, edited by G. Coedes, a French scholar who worked with Prince Damrong. This work has been followed up till the present day and the Office of the Prime Minister has just published the fifth volume in 1972. See an account on King Mongkut's attempt on the Ram Khamhaeng's inscription by A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, 'Epigraphic and Historical Studies, No. 9: The Inscription of King Rama Gamhen of Sukhodaya (1292 A.D.)' *JSS*, 59, ii (1971) pp. 179-228.

was shown during a dispute between Thailand and France over the claim to Cambodian territory, when he presented a copy of a chronicle of Cambodian history to French diplomats to support Thailand's claim to sovereignty over Cambodia.¹² His son Chulalongkorn likewise paid a great deal of attention to the study of history, as is clear from his extensive writings in this field. He sometimes called on history to substantiate his argument. For example, his work on the question of succession and the office of the heir apparent: *Ruang prapeani kantang Phra Maha Upparat* (The Tradition of Heir Apparent Appointment), first published in 1936, clearly demonstrated his vast knowledge of history. The King cited a long history of Ayudhya (1351-1767) to support his argument about the office of *Wang Na*, the ancient office of the heir apparent which he abolished in 1885 in favour of the office of the Crown Prince.¹³

As suggested above, the study of history took a new turn during this period. According to one author the change was a new development in the writing of history, in that the style changed from the descriptive to the analytical. This author has compared two major works with the same title: *Phraratchaphongsawadan Krung Rattanakosin: Ratchakan thi 2* (The Royal Chronicle of Bangkok: the Second Reign) by two historians, Chaophraya Thippakonrawong and Prince Damrong. Chaophraya Thippakonrawong wrote his chronicle between 1869-1870, and Prince Damrong finished his version of the chronicle in the early part of the 1930s. The first chronicle by Chaophraya Thippakonrawong is very much along the line of traditional Thai historiography in that he collected information from a number of sources and put the facts together. His work was merely descriptive, in the style of the traditional chronicles of the late Ayudhya and early Bangkok periods. On the contrary, Prince Damrong used a new technique when he wrote his chronicle. He selected his facts from both Thai and foreign sources, and then systematically organized his history. He was known to be critical about the sources and statements he used and, perhaps most important, he analysed the causes and effects operative in that historical period. Prince Damrong thereby set a new style for Thai historiography, developing it from the traditional descriptive chronicle to modern analytical history.¹⁴

Aside from these changes, historians were very concerned with evidence and sources. They eagerly gathered as much material as possible whether from within the country or from overseas. This is reflected in the establishment of a library within the Grand Palace. The first library, known as the Vajiranana

¹² Reynolds, p. 64 has referred to M. Osborne and D.K. Wyatt, 'The Abridged Cambodian Chronicle, A Thai Version of Cambodian History', *France-Asie*, 22, ii (1968).

¹³ Wyatt, *Politics of Reform*, pp. 50-62.

¹⁴ See Chalongsuntharawanit, 'Wiwatthanakan kankhien prawatsat Thai . . .', *Sinlapakon*, 16, iv (November 1972) pp. 68-82.

Library, was founded in 1881 by the sons of King Mongkut in memory of their father.¹⁵ The Library collected and printed books in Thai and foreign languages (mostly English). For example it printed a great number of *phongsawadan*; started the important series *Prachum Phongsawadan* (Collected Chronicles) in 1908; and published important records, in English, such as *Records of the Relations between Siam and Foreign Countries in the Seventeenth Century* (1915). Again Prince Damrong was a leading partner in the library organization, which developed in 1905 to become the Bangkok Library, with its own building outside the Grand Palace. By 1932 it had a collection of more than 200,000 books.¹⁶ This is the origin of the present-day National Library, which in 1966 moved to a new building.

In this period the study of history became thoroughly established and received much attention from the Thai elite. The style of historical writing was changed to a more modern one, and there was an effort to create facilities for the study of history, such as a printing press and library services. Although in the beginning historical study tended to be limited to the court circle of royalty and noblemen, it soon developed beyond that limited circle when it was introduced as a subject in Chulalongkorn University. This first major educational institute had been founded by King Rama VI in 1910 as Chulalongkorn Civil Service College, and in 1916 was elevated to become Chulalongkorn University. History was first taught there in 1923 in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences (now known as the Faculty of Arts).¹⁷ At the outset the teaching of history at Chulalongkorn was minimal, since the Faculty emphasized the production of science students. It was not until 1933, ten years later, that more emphasis was directed towards teaching history as a major field of study. Each year the Faculty trained a number of students to become history teachers after their graduation.¹⁸ From this time on one can say that the study of history had become institutionalized, there being a major institution to take care of it.

We may draw a preliminary conclusion that the field of history took a new direction during the period of absolute monarchy and developed beyond the bounds of the court circle after the foundation of Chulalongkorn University. It was not until much later, however, that the field was further enlarged. After the coup of 1932, which transformed Thailand into a constitutional monarchy, there was more need for higher education, and a second university, now known as Thammasat University, was founded in 1934; it was mainly a law school, and thus history courses were only a minor part of the syllabus. It was not until 1962 that the Faculty of Liberal Arts was established and began to offer history as a major field.

¹⁵ Maenmat Chawalit, *Prawat hosamut haeng chat* (Bangkok, 1966) p. 10.

¹⁶ Aemon, p. 15.

¹⁷ See *Prawat Chulalongkorn Mahawithayalai 2459-2509* (Bangkok, 1967) pp. 175-203.

¹⁸ See *Aksongsat Nithet 2516* (Bangkok, 1973) pp. 78-80.

In addition to Chulalongkorn and Thammasat, the Sri Nakharinwirot University (formerly the Education College) is one of the most important contributors in the field of history. This university was founded in 1954, with the main campus in Bangkok and seven other branches around the country. Like Thammasat, the Sri Nakharinwirot University originally only offered history courses as part of the education for its students and it was not until 1964 that history became a major field of study. At present the main campus produces roughly more than fifty history graduates a year.

There are two more universities which also contribute to the field of history. Silpakorn University, which was established in 1943, acted first as a fine arts college. Its main campus in Bangkok has offered a major field in archaeology since 1957, and therefore history courses are also taught there. The Faculty of Archaeology has contributed much to the field of history since its faculty members and students have been involved in excavation of ancient historical sites, such as Ayudhya and Sukhothai. Even though the Faculty at Silpakorn does not directly produce history graduates, it has helped in the development of the field of history, especially for the ancient periods of Ayudhya, Sukhothai, and even the more remote times such as Dvaravati and pre-history. In addition, Silpakorn soon expanded to have an up-country campus at Nakhon Pathom, forty-eight kilometers west of Bangkok. The Nakhon Pathom campus has a Faculty of Arts which has offered a history major since 1968. Lastly, Chiangmai University, founded in 1964, and probably the youngest among all the high academic institutions mentioned here, developed out of a medical college which was in operation before that date, but now has a Faculty of Humanities which offers a major in history.

In order to give a better picture of the modern Thai historiography, the *prawatsat*, three major historians have been chosen for discussion. They are Prince Damrong (1862-1943), Luang Wichitwathakan (1898-1962) and Jit Phumisak (1930-1966). These men, who represent three main streams of focus, have left a large number of their writings behind. Their treatments of Thai history are very much under the debate and study of present-day Thai history students. Therefore, it would be worthwhile for us to venture into each man's life and work.

Prince Damrong (1862-1943)

Prince Damrong is a son of King Mongkut, and also one of the most celebrated statesmen of Thailand. He grew up in the period of great change in Thai society when it faced modernization and Western colonialism. Damrong was educated in both Western and classical Thai scholarship. Thus he is a man who was able to bridge these two cultures for development of a modern Thailand. During the reign of his brother King Chulalongkorn (1863-1910), Damrong became very prominent in the Thai government, holding many important positions, including

Minister of the Interior. In spite of his heavy responsibilities of governing the country, Damrong devoted much of his time to the writing of history. In 1932 he was forced into exile in Penang after the coup which transformed Thailand from an absolute monarchy into a constitution system. After a decade of exile Prince Damrong returned home and died in 1943. He left an extensive collection of writings to which very few scholars could lay claim.

As mentioned before, the work of Prince Damrong reveals a change in the writing of Thai history, the most notable is the use of sources. It is said that he was very much influenced by the method used by the great German historian, Ranke.¹⁹ For example, his account of the foundation of the kingdom of Ayudhya introduced a new technique in looking at Thai history. Formerly, the *tamnan* and *phongsawadan* schools of thought described the 'birth' of Ayudhya by associating it with myths and external forces beyond human control. Ayudhya came into existence, as the old schools see it, as a result of the Buddha's prophecy and/or miraculous acts of certain individuals. However, Damrong explained it by presenting a tangible historical fact. According to him, Ayudhya was a result of a long period of Thai settlement in the Menam Basin. It became the centre of the Thai when the Khmer began to lose control of the area. Various sources were taken into consideration and a hypothesis was set up to explain the origin of Ayudhya. Thus he rejected the old methods of the *tamnan* and *phongsawadan*.²⁰

It can be said that Damrong's education had a lot of influence on his thinking. His familiarity with Westerners (mostly Europeans) brought him into contact with the 'scientific method'. The time in which he lived was dominated by Western ideas, and the concept of Thai history took a step out from the *phongsawadan* school of thought into a modern one. However, Damrong is said to be the person 'who bridged the old Thai world-view with the new one'.²¹ This is to say that even though he is seen as a product of the latter part of the nineteenth century he, nevertheless, was still very much under the influence of the old Thai world-view. Damrong veered away from the *phongsawadan* tradition but at the same time his works show much of the legacy of the former period. Therefore kingdom and monarchy, central themes of the *phongsawadan* school, remained the focus of Damrong's history. Historical events occurred and revolved around these two institutions. Damrong's history like those of the *phongsawadan*, was very much concerned with dynasties, royal personalities and kingdoms, even though the methods were different.

¹⁹ Kobkua Suwannathat, 'Kansuksa prawatsat sakun Damrong Rajanubhab', *Aksansat Phichan*, 2, vi (1974) pp. 28-44.

²⁰ See my *Rise of Ayudhya*, ch. 4.

²¹ Kobkua, p. 30.

The second half of the nineteenth century transformed the Thai kingdom, centred at Bangkok, from a traditional state into a modern entity. The basic features of the country were changed from that of a kingdom to a nation-state with more centralization of power at the capital. In fact, Damrong contributed very much to this change as a Minister of the Interior who effectively updated local administration. Thus one can see that an important element which was emerging in Damrong's history was the concept of concern for the nation-state. Modern Thai nationalism is the product of Western impact. Thailand was suddenly encircled by several foreign powers which threatened Thai territorial integrity and sovereignty. Thus, the Thai became more critical of themselves and began to search for their identity – an issue never before seriously considered. Damrong's work clearly reflected this trend. He discussed the origins of the Thai and how they formed a nation. This was new in the treatment of history, and was not a traditional concern of the *tamnan* and *phongsawadan* historians.

In short, the concept of history, as we see from Damrong's work, commenced with the impact of Western penetration in Thailand. It was influenced by the West which contributed new methods of using sources and 'scientific' analyses. However, many of the old themes of the *phongsawadan* tradition still remained. Thus, although using new methods, Damrong still wrote history where the monarchy remained the prime moving force. Thai history became the history of a particular nation surrounded by many other countries, no longer in isolation.

Luang Wichitwathakan (1898-1962)

Luang Wichitwathakan was born of very humble origins outside the Bangkok elite circle. He moved his way up by joining the *sangha* for many years. Therefore, his main education came through this experience, studying the classics and teaching himself at the same time. When Luang Wichitwathakan left the monkhood and joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, he was sent to Paris as assistant secretary at the Thai Embassy and later was assigned to the League of Nations in Geneva for five years. His major work was published in 1931 under the title *Prawatsat Sakon* (World History, 12 volumes). A year later, after the coup which overthrew the absolute monarchy, Luang Wichitwathakan became the spokesman of the new regime. During his long service in the government, from 1934 until his death in 1962, Luang Wichitwathakan held many important posts including Director of the Fine Arts Department, cabinet-minister and ambassador to various countries. However, his most notable position was as advisor to the Phibun and Sarit regimes. He displayed an ability of manipulating, writing and organizing cultural activities which were directed towards arousing nationalistic feeling within the country. Similar to Prince Damrong, Luang Wichitwathakan was a prolific writer.

Luang Wichitwathakan was the prime mover of modern Thai nationalism. Since 1932 successive governments have been trying to create a new kind of legitimacy, the absolute monarchy having been overthrown. Nationalism became a means of rallying popular support for most of these governments. The period between 1932 and World War II witnessed the rise of nationalism and militarism in Thailand, and Luang Wichitwathakan became the spokesman and prime instigator of these movements. His writings reflect this clearly. In 1942 he wrote a nationalistic account (in English) condemning French imperialism entitled *Thailand's Case*. This short essay explained how Thailand unjustly lost its territory in Indochina to France, and urged the public to support the Phibun government's irredentist policies.²²

Luang Wichitwathakan's history focused on nationalism as the heart of all the historical events. He put aside the role of the monarchy, predominant in the writings of the *phongsawadan* and of Prince Damrong. Thus Thai history was interpreted according to the purity and glory of the Thai race; everything was aimed at creating a new nation. His interpretation of Thai history showed uncomfortable similarities to Nazi and Fascist writings of the period.

Luang Wichitwathakan is very much criticized for his methodology. Being a politician *par excellence*, he often ignored facts and accuracy. His writings sometimes rest upon hearsay and his own imagination.²³ He unabashedly glorified the Thai race at the expense of others, many times by totally ignoring their existence or significance in history.²⁴

Luang Wichitwathakan's history was very popular. It became an ideological weapon of the new ruling elite, especially the military which sought justification to rule the country. Furthermore, Luang Wichitwathakan had the advantage of exploiting the mass media to disseminate his interpretation of history. As Director of the Fine Arts Department after the coup of 1932 he used this position to propagate his conceptualization of history through music, plays, and

²² However, Luang Wichitwathakan ignored the rise of nationalism in Laos and Cambodia which opposed all forms of imperialism including Thai and French. See my 'The First Phibun Government and its Involvement in World War II', *JSS*, 62, ii (1974) pp. 179-228.

²³ Kobkua Suwannathat, 'Kandhien prawatsat Thai baeb chatniyom: picharana Luang Wichitwathakan', (hereafter, 'Writing of nationalistic'), *Warasan Thammasat*, 6, i (1969) pp. 149-80.

²⁴ For example, 'the Cambodians . . . we have nothing to talk about this race . . . ;Java, more important than any nation in Southeast Asia before . . . now enslaved for more than one hundred years . . . had debilitated the mind and capacity of the people . . . ; the Philippines, the people of this nation, to say without any reservations, are barbaric like all the peoples of the islands in the Pacific Ocean, they never had civilization or culture, and were very mixed . . .'. Kobkua, pp. 163-4.

songs. These were presented on stage and the Radio of Thailand. His skills in writing and sense of public sentiments contributed to the spread and popularization of his version of Thai history, no matter how politically biased.²⁵

In conclusion, Luang Wichitwathakan's history came at a time of political fluidity. His writings were designed to fulfill certain political needs — an ideological interpretation of history to suit the prerequisites of the new ruling elite. Nationalism and racial supremacy were then in vogue and Luang Wichitwathakan as politician cum historian (in that order) was a product of his times.

Jit Phumisak (1930-1966)

Jit Phumisak, a son of a minor provincial officer, spent many of his early years moving from place to place where his father was stationed. After World War II he moved to Bangkok and finished high school. His writing career began when he was studying at the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. In the middle of the 1950s the Phibun government began to lose its popularity and to compensate, the government allowed a certain degree of freedom of speech. A large number of Jit's writings came out during this time, including *Chomna Sakdina Thai* (The Face of Thai Feudalism) which is a Marxist analysis of Thai history. Jit Phumisak, together with other writers, was arrested and put in jail when Sarit staged two successive coups in 1957 and 1958. He spent the following six years in prison and did a tremendous amount of writing there. Most of the time he was able to smuggle out his articles and have them published under various pen-names. In 1964 Jit was released and left for the jungle to join a guerrilla movement in the Northeast. In 1966 he was shot dead.

Jit Phumisak's creative legacy covered many subjects ranging from history, politics, literature and culture. His writings were very expressive and provoking, and, as in the cases of Damrong and Luang Wichitwathakan, he had good command of the Thai language. However, his Thai was more forceful since he worked from a different social view point. Moreover, he was a poet who had mastered classical Thai and used it accordingly — a quality which Damrong and Luang Wichitwathakan did not possess. Jit composed poems and songs for the masses which are now sung and cited by insurgents and radical students.

It is interesting to see that Jit's writings have become very popular after the 1973 student uprising. Since then a period of freedom of speech has been flourishing in Thailand. His books have been published with several reprints, and his songs and poems are sung and read. In fact his name has become a controversial issue in Thailand today.

²⁵ In fact, his works have been presented on stage and radio, unrivalled by any writer in contemporary Thailand. See a list of his plays in my 'The First Phibun Government and Its Involvement in World War II, *JSS*, 62, ii (1974) pp. 39-41.

Jit Phumisak is similar to other Thai historians in the sense that he was influenced by the impact of the West, particularly the building up of the American role in Asia in the 1950s. Therefore his writings are very much concerned with anti-imperialism and the collaboration of the Thai ruling class with foreigners. His sympathy was with other Asians who fought against Western colonialism and with the oppressed class in the country.

Jit's book *The Face of Thai Feudalism* reflected his view of history. In this book he covered Thai history from the Sukhothai period in the thirteenth century to the beginning of the Western impact in the nineteenth century. His approach to history is a Marxist one, dividing Thai society into two classes: the oppressors and the oppressed. The oppressors are those whom he called the *sakdina* (feudals) who owned the means of production whether they were cultivated land or forced labour service. The oppressed are the *phrai* (corvée labourers) and the *that* (slaves) who had to work for the *sakdina*.

Jit's approach to Thai history, employing Marxist theory, may not appear radical today. However in Thailand, where communism is outlawed and Marxist ideas socially ostracized, Jit's writings represent the forbidden fruit and an alternative interpretation of Thai society. Most Thai historians either reject or ignore the question of class structures in Thailand. But Jit backed up his analysis by historical evidence. His knowledge of Thai history and his command of the language helped him make his interpretation credible. Thus it is not so much a question of a Marxist approach which shows in his history, but rather the issues of class exploitation in the form of class differentiation, land ownership, corvée labour and oppressive taxation.²⁶

In short the masses were the main interest of Jit in describing history. His books speak out their misery and various means which the ruling class employed for its self interest. It can be said that Jit's history is a political weapon against the ruling class in Thailand. As he put it:

In fact, the subject of history is the subject of man's social struggle; this subject is the example of social struggle for later generations. The studying of history is the heart of studying social development, a major key which opens to right actions. The *sakdina* realizes this fact, therefore, they have controlled the study of history in their hands, and used this subject for their own class's benefit.²⁷

²⁶ See a discussion on his writings in Suchart Sawasdisri (ed.), *Jit Phumisak* (Association of the Social Sciences, 1974). Now banned.

²⁷ Somsamai Sisutphan (Jit Phumisak), *Chomna sakdina Thai* (Bangkok, 1974) pp. 57-8. Now banned.

Conclusion

The writing of history has to be viewed in its historical setting. This is to say the writing of history depends very much on time and spatial factors. Thai historiography has well reflected these parameters. The *tamnan* represents the earliest known form of historiography. It was written when Buddhism was the prime moving force of society. Hence historians, monks and learned men writing within this social milieu reflected religious tones and concepts in their works. *Tamnan* historiography was typical from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century and was, then, replaced by a new form of historiography, the *phongsawadan*.

Phongsawadan historiography became predominant in the seventeenth century concomitant with the fact that Ayudhya achieved the consolidation of its position as the centre of the Thai kingdom. This secular school of writing lasted until the first half of the nineteenth century. It mainly focused upon dynastic history, the role of kings, and related events. This was probably because royal chroniclers had replaced monks and traditional sages as sources of historical information, and they were concerned with dynastic history.

Thai secular historiography developed another distinct school by the middle of the nineteenth century, when the traditional scope of religious and dynastic history was broadened further. This was the result of the penetration of Western colonialism, educational reforms and the coming into being of an educated middle class. Thai historiography had to cope with new concepts such as the nation-state, nationalism and the universalistic ethic of social equality. Thus modern Thai history shifted from its *phongsawadan* tradition to reflect society's concern for modernity. By close analysis of the works of Prince Damrong, Luang Wichitwathakan and Jit Phumisak, we can trace clearly the development of modern Thai historiography.

THE IMAGE OF MAJAPAHIT IN LATER JAVANESE AND INDONESIAN WRITING

S. Supomo

The history of Java, as far as it can be ascertained from inscriptions hitherto published, began in the fifth century, when a kingdom is known to have existed in the vicinity of present-day Jakarta. This kingdom, which is called Taruma in the inscriptions, perhaps only covered a small area in the western part of the island, and apparently lasted only for a short time before it disappeared leaving almost nothing behind it — apart from a few inscriptions and perhaps a couple of geographical names.¹ For centuries it was deeply buried in the obscurity of the Javanese past, forgotten by the local population as well as the Javanese people in general, and no doubt it would have remained there forever had not the modern science of palaeography succeeded in reading its inscriptions.

Taruma's case is not, of course, an exception. In the course of the ten centuries of history from the days of Taruma to the establishment of later Mataram in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, many states emerged in the various parts of the island only to disappear completely from the historical scene. Some of these kingdoms left behind them many unmistakable marks, in the form of ruins of what must once have been impressive religious monuments; some left a number of inscriptions sufficient to enable us to form a somewhat clearer, if still disjointed, picture of their history; others left no more than one or two badly preserved inscriptions; and still others left nothing but their names mentioned in other inscriptions or in literary works which have come down to us.

However, not all the kingdoms and personages of ancient Java were forgotten by later generations. Many of them are still very much alive in the collective memory of the people and have become favourite themes in folk stories as well as in the literary works of later generations — although most of these also have been taken out of their historical contexts and distorted either intentionally or unintentionally to such an extent that it is possible only with great difficulty, if at all, to put them back into their place in history. Among these kingdoms none has remained more alive in the memory of later generations than the kingdom of Majapahit. Stories about Majapahit or about one or two personages (allegedly) of this period abound in the folk-tales, legends and chronicles, not only of the Javanese and the Balinese, but also of the Malays as well as the populations of many other islands of Indonesia.

¹ See N.J. Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* ('s-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1931 2nd ed.) pp. 77-81; R.Ng. Poerbatjaraka, *Riwayat Indonesia* (Jakarta, 1952) Vol. I, pp. 12-16.

Majapahit also happens to be one of the states of ancient Java about which we are relatively well equipped to reconstruct its history, especially the first half of it. Apart from numerous inscriptions issued from the period not long after its establishment in 1293 till the last part of the fifteenth century, we have at our disposal an invaluable source in the form of a contemporary work written during the heyday of Majapahit, and a near-contemporary work written not long after its decline. These works — the *Nagarakrtagama* and the *Pararaton* respectively — put Majapahit in a unique position in our knowledge of ancient Java, for they give us a much better insight into the conditions of the country than all the inscriptions could possibly do. They are also the only Javanese sources through which we can glimpse the Malay worlds and other parts of Indonesia during the Majapahit period.

It seems that it was a custom in those days that a king made tours of his realm as frequently as practicable.² 'At the end of the cool-season', Prapanca, the author of the *Nagarakrtagama*, tells us, 'the king always makes tours to enjoy the scenery'.³ Prapanca, in fact, called his poem *Desawarnana*, that is 'the description of the region(s)', which is a more appropriate name than the one under which it is now commonly referred to,⁴ as the greater part of the poem is devoted to a description of villages and countryside in general which were visited by Rajasanagara a few years before the completion of this poem in 1365.

On such tours business was usually combined with pleasure. The king travelled around the countryside, stopping at various places to give audience to village communities, receiving their respect and tribute and distributing his magical power and gifts; he visited many shrines and other religious establishments to pay homage to the ancestors and the gods, to restore decayed religious buildings and to provide them with new buildings and new land-grants for their upkeep; and he visited sages living in the hermitages to seek guidance on both temporal and spiritual matters. But the king also used the occasion for hunting, fishing and attending cock-fights, or merely enjoying the beautiful panorama along the coasts and mountains accompanied by all the ladies of the *kraton*, high dignitaries and his retinue.

² This custom probably owed its origin to the Indian tradition, see A.L. Basham, *The Wonder that was India* (New York, First Evergreen Ed., 1959) p. 90; see also S. Supomo (tr.), *Arjunawijaya, a Kakawin of mpu Tantular in Bibliotheca Indonesica* (The Hague M. Nijhoff, 1977) Vol. 14, pp. 57-68, 77.

³ *Nagarakrtagama*, 17, 4. For the text of this poem see Th. Pigeaud, *Java in the Fourteenth Century, A Study in Cultural History* (The Hague, 1960-63) Vol. I. The translation, however, is mine.

⁴ *Nagarakrtagama*, 90, 2; 94, 4. The title *Nagarakrtagama*, which means 'the kingdom which is ordered according to the holy tradition', occurs only in the colophon of the manuscript; see P.J. Zoetmulder, *Kalangwan, A Survey of Old Javanese Literature* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1974) p. 350.

One of the first tours listed in the *Nagarakrtagama* is a tour to Pajang, made by Rajasanagara in 1353, which was followed by a visit to Lasem in the following year.⁵ That Rajasanagara made these visits not long after his succession to the throne (in 1350) indicates the importance of these regions of Central Java in the view of the ruler of Majapahit. Indeed, from the *Nagarakrtagama* and the *Pararaton* we know that Pajang was the apanage of Rajasanagara's sister, Lasem was that of his cousin – later transferred to his daughter – and Mataram, which was not mentioned during these visits, was the apanage of the son of the princess of Pajang. Furthermore, this prince of Mataram was later married to the only daughter of the king and, after the death of his father-in-law, succeeded him as the ruler of Majapahit (1349-1428). Mataram was then given to one of his wives as her apanage.⁶ This close link between Mataram and Majapahit apparently continued during the whole Majapahit period. Among the members of the royal family listed in the Waringin-pitu inscription of 1477, we read of a princess of Kembang-jenar, which was probably another name for Mataram;⁷ and the *Pararaton* mentions yet another prince of Mataram in the last list of the members of the Majapahit royal family, almost in the same line with the chronogram which signifies the year of the fall of Majapahit, namely 1400S.⁸

All these accounts suggest that from the point of view of the rulers of Majapahit, Mataram was always regarded as an integral part of the realm. Its ruler, like that of Majapahit, was one of the group of rulers designated as the rulers of Yawabhumi, 'the land of Java', all of which seemed to have been closely associated with the king of Majapahit. As opposed to the term *yawabhumi*, which apparently conveys the idea of Java as a unit, the *Nagarakrtagama* repeatedly mentions another group of states from the other islands which, as a group, were called *nusantara* or *dwipantara* 'other islands', or simply *desantara* 'other countries'.⁹ Both Yawabhumi and Nusantara were, according to the *Nagarakrtagama*, under the protection of the king of Majapahit. But, whereas the *Nagarakrtagama* lists the annual tours made by Rajasanagara throughout many parts of Java, Prapanca did not report any visit made by the king of Majapahit to any one of the almost one hundred countries which comprised

⁵ *Nagarakrtagama*, 17, 6.

⁶ For a discussion on the structure of the kingdom of Majapahit, see B. Schrieke, *Indonesian Sociological Studies: Selected Writings, Part Two: Ruler and Realm in Early Java* (The Hague, W. van Hoeve, 1957) pp. 25-70.

⁷ See C.C. Berg, *Het Rijk van de Vijfvoudige Buddha* (Amsterdam, Noord-Hollandsche Uitg., 1962) pp. 232, 236.

⁸ J.L.A. Brandes, *Pararaton (Ken Arok): Het Boek der Koningen van Tumapel en van Majapahit* (Akademie van Wetenschappen, Amsterdam. Afdeling Letterkunde, Verhandelingen, Vol. 69, no. 1) (Batavia, Albrecht and Rusche, 1896) p. 32.

⁹ For the names of the countries which belonged to this group see *Nagarakrtagama* 13, 1 – 15, 3.

Nusantara. This is perhaps not surprising. Although both Java and Nusantara were 'submissive' to the ruler of Majapahit, they nevertheless remained two separate worlds: the former was intimately known by the poet of the *Nagara-krtagama* – and no doubt also by his master, the great ruler of Majapahit – the latter seemed to be no more than a list of vaguely known geographical names.

It would be interesting to compare the contemporary views on Majapahit from these two different worlds, as well as to compare them with the views from inside the royal compound of Majapahit – such as the *Nagara-krtagama* – but this is of course impossible. The earliest accounts of Majapahit from Central Java which are available to us occur in the *babad* literature, the earliest versions of which were probably written in the first half of the seventeenth century.¹⁰ From the Malay world, one of the earliest chronicles, the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, purports to relate events occurring in the fourteenth century, but the last part of this *Hikayat*, which contains the episode of Majapahit's attack on Pasai, was perhaps added later.¹¹ The most important chronicle from the Malay literature, the *Sejarah Melayu*, was also written in the first half of the seventeenth century.¹² By the time all these accounts were written the political map of Java and the archipelago in general had changed tremendously. The once great kingdom of Majapahit had ceased to exist for more than a century, its supremacy over Nusantara must have even slipped away much earlier; after a long and intense struggle to fill the power vacuum left behind by the disintegration of Majapahit, Mataram had succeeded in unifying almost all the small principalities of Java under its wings, but in the meanwhile foreign powers had entrenched themselves in many parts of Nusantara and one of them had even begun to establish its authority in Java itself.

Given the close relationship that existed between Central Java, Mataram in particular, and Majapahit throughout most of the Majapahit period, it is not surprising that in the state chronicles of Mataram we read that the founder of the new dynasty of Mataram, Panembahan Senapati, is said to be a descendant of Brawijaya, the last ruler of Majapahit. Perhaps the fact that a *bhre* Mataram is

¹⁰ For the dating of the *Babad Tanah Jawi*, see C.C. Berg, 'Twee Nieuwe Publicaties betreffende de Geschiedenis en de Geschiedeschrijving van Mataram', *Indonesië*, 8 (1955) pp. 97-128; H.J. de Graaf, 'Later Javanese Sources and Historiography' in Soedjatmoko et al. (eds.), *An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography* (Cornell Modern Indonesia Project) (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1965) pp. 129-36.

¹¹ For the dating of the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*, see A.H. Hill, 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai', *JMBRAS*, 33, ii (1960) p. 40. The final episode, which contains the account of the conquest of Pasai and many other countries by Majapahit, probably was added much later than the date suggested by Hill for the first parts of this chronicle (i.e. not later than 1390). For the possibility that the whole text was compiled after the writing of the *Sejarah Melayu*, see A. Teeuw, 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai and Sejarah Melayu' in J. Bastin and R. Roolvink (eds.), *Malayan and Indonesian Studies* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964) pp. 222-34.

¹² For the dating of the *Sejarah Melayu*, see R. Roolvink, 'The Variant Versions of the Malay Annals', *BKI*, 123, pp. 310-29.

mentioned in almost the last line of the *Pararaton* as well as the fact that a *bhre* Mataram once became a king of Majapahit had some bearing on the choice of Senapati's ancestors. But even without any knowledge of the *Pararaton* and the *Nagarakrtagama*, such a claim must have been the only possible choice in sixteenth and early seventeenth century Java if one wanted to assert one's right to the throne by invoking the principle of continuity.¹³ The predominant position that Majapahit occupied in the political structure of at least Eastern Java, and parts of Central Java throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, must have left strong imprints on the collective memory of the population in these areas. Words such as 'Are you not of the blood of Brawijaya of Majapahit?' were apparently enough to spur Javanese warriors to fight on until they fell in battle.¹⁴ In his rebellion against Mataram in 1677, which would have succeeded had the Dutch not interfered, Trunajaya raised the cry of restoring the greatness of Majapahit, and even after his defeat he advised the ruler of Mataram to establish his court at Majapahit.¹⁵

Yet, when we read the *Babad Tanah Jawi*,¹⁶ this greatness that Majapahit was supposed to possess – and which we would expect the author(s) of this chronicle to have been proud to put on display – is not altogether obvious. Compared to the expansive and picturesque image of Majapahit that one is likely to obtain from reading the *Nagarakrtagama*, the picture presented in the *Babad Tanah Jawi* may appear extremely lacklustre and shrunken to a much smaller size. As depicted by Prapanca in his poem, the great king of Majapahit at that time was – apart from being superhuman, god-like, never forgetting to take care of his people and his realm, et cetera – a young man still in the prime of life, full of vigour and enthusiasm; he seemed to be always on the move, touring various parts of his realm, and almost unrestrained in his pleasure-seeking: hunting, dancing, enjoying excellent food, alcoholic beverages and beautiful women. The realm was likewise at the zenith of its power: prosperous, bustling with life, its roads overcrowded with enthusiastic almost child-like people fighting for the best places whenever the beloved king and the colourful procession that accompanied him passed by; and its expanse was – to borrow a present-day political slogan – from Lamuri (Aceh) to Seran (in Irian), from Buruneng (Brunei) to Timur (Timor).

¹³ For a discussion on the importance of continuity as a means to strengthen one's claim to the throne in Javanese history, see Schrieke, pp. 7 ff.

¹⁴ See W.L. Olthof, *Poenika Serat Babad Tanah Jawi wiwit saking Nabi Adam doemoegi ing taon 1647* ('s-Gravenhage, 1941) p. 240; cf. Schrieke, p. 278.

¹⁵ Schrieke, p. 278.

¹⁶ For the accounts of Majapahit, see Olthof, pp. 12-30.

The rulers of the Majapahit of the *Babad Tanah Jawi*, on the other hand, seemed to be devoid of this kind of vigour and enthusiasm for life. Indeed, the last of them, Brawijaya, whose reign was related at much greater length than the other six rulers preceding him, is said to have suffered from *rajasinga* (venereal disease), which was cured only after he slept with a Wandanese slave-girl – and thanks to this union, a boy was born whose great-great-great grandson became the founder of the Mataram royal house. The *Babad Tanah Jawi*, however, gives us the impression that Brawijaya suffered less from this disease than from the realization that he was merely a forerunner for the emergence of the kingdom of Demak which, in turn, would pave the way for the accession of his more rightful heirs: the rulers of Mataram. Even on the eve of the establishment of Majapahit, it had been prophesied that his descendants would in future become the rulers of Java, residing in the region between Pamantingan and Mount Merapi. Once he tried to cheat the prophecy by ordering a village elder to kill his son by the Wandanese girl, but of course the attempt failed. It must have been a great relief to this rather pathetic king when, after seeing the *adipati* of Bintara (Demak) – another son of his who, it had been prophesied, would be the king of Java directly after him – leading the advancing Muslim troops into his *kraton*, he finally ascended to heaven accompanied by all his retinue who remained loyal to him.

As for the realm, the *Babad Tanah Jawi* tells us that after its victorious campaign against Pajajaran, the whole population of Java submitted to Majapahit. However, of some ninety-odd countries in Nusantara which, according to the *Nagarakrtagama*, sought protection from Majapahit, only one – Palembang – is still mentioned in the *Babad Tanah Jawi* as being a vassal state of Majapahit. Wandan, which also occurs in Prapanca's list, is mentioned as we have noted above as the home of the slave-girl who cured Brawijaya's disease, but there is no indication that it was under the suzerainty of Majapahit. In fact, the girl was brought to Majapahit by his queen, the daughter of the king of Campa. And this Campa is the only country mentioned in the *Babad Tanah Jawi* of the nine neighbouring countries which were described by Prapanca as always friendly to Majapahit. It is clear, then, that the Majapahit of the *Babad Tanah Jawi* is a much smaller edition of the picture presented by Prapanca some three centuries earlier. Indeed, during the reign of Brawijaya, Majapahit was not even able to control the whole of Eastern Java. Even Gajah Mada, who was made to live in these difficult last days of Majapahit in the *Babad Tanah Jawi*,¹⁷ was powerless to stem the inevitable disintegration of the

¹⁷ The historical Gajah Mada died, according to *Nagarakrtagama* 71, 1, in 1364, more than a century before the fall of Majapahit. The *Babad Tanah Jawi* is in fact conspicuously silent – apart from mentioning the name of Ayam Wuruk once – about the golden age of Majapahit.

great empire he had built. It was during the reign of Brawijaya that small Muslim communities seemed to sprout all over the northern coast of Java — some in townships less than a hundred kilometers from Majapahit — all acting independently in defiance of Majapahit's authority. In brief, far from presenting a picture of a great empire, the *Babad Tanah Jawi* offers us an old, tired, sick man.

Such a picture is even more surprising when we compare it with the picture obtainable from reading Malay chronicles. The *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai*,¹⁸ one of the earliest of these chronicles, tells us what kind of fate would befall a country which, by design or not, caused the displeasure of the king of Majapahit. When the king of Majapahit learnt of the death of his daughter, who had gone to Pasai of her own accord to marry a Pasai prince, he sent an armada of 'about four hundred of the largest junks, and also many barges and galleys' led by 'an officer of the highest rank accompanied by hundreds of other officers and commanders'. With their superior numbers they overwhelmed Pasai and drove the sultan out of the capital city to a remote place some fifteen days journey away; and they plundered the whole town so that 'every boat was loaded with such quantities of booty and prisoners that it was filled to overflowing'.

As 'the blood of men flowed like water' because of this attack, one would expect that the author of the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* would describe Majapahit in an unfavourable light. Yet the descriptions of Majapahit occurring in this chronicle could easily pass for those written by a Majapahit writer living in Prapanca's days. Thus it tells us, among other things:

The Emperor was famous for his love of justice. The empire grew prosperous. People in vast numbers thronged the city. At this time every kind of food was in great abundance. There was a ceaseless coming and going of people from the territories overseas which had submitted to the king, to say nothing of places inside Java itself. Of the districts on the coast, from the west came the whole of the west, from the east came the whole of the east. From places inland right down to the shores of the Southern Ocean the people all came for an audience with the Emperor, bringing tribute and offerings. From the east they came from the Banda Islands, from Ceram and from K.r.ntok

¹⁸ Hill, pp. 153-9.

The land of Majapahit was supporting a large population. Everywhere one went there were gongs and drums being beaten, people dancing to the strains of all kinds of loud music, entertainments of many kinds like the living theatre, the shadow play, masked-plays, step-dancing and musical dramas. These were the commonest sights and went on day and night in the land of Majapahit.¹⁹

The overseas territories (*jajahan di seberang lautan*) enumerated in the *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* extend to almost the same area covered in Prapanca's *Nusantara*: from Pasai to the Banda Islands. Indeed, in the eyes of the sultan of Pasai, Majapahit was the equal of China and Keling in its military power.²⁰ And the chief architect of this great empire and its military power, first minister Gajah Mada, was well-remembered in the Malay chronicles. He was the one who organized all the expeditions to conquer 'the countries, the bays and river-reaches and islands' not yet subject to Majapahit — just as he did in the *Pararaton*. These ventures, apart from the fiasco of Minangkabau,²¹ were highly successful. He was the most powerful figure in Majapahit; as a Javanese young man in the *Sejarah Melayu* told Gajah Mada himself, who was incognito at that time, 'he is practically the king in this country as it is', yet his loyalty to the throne was never in doubt.²² It was long after his death that, as the *Hikayat Banjar* put it: 'Majapahit became more and more chaotic. Everyone fled from the capital and some went to Bali, others to Tuban, to Madura, to Sidayu, to Sandang, to Demak, to Pajang or to Kudus'.²³

One way to gauge a country's prestige in the Malay chronicles, and Malay literature in general, is to see how great was the demand for their princes and princesses by other countries. The more a country was held in esteem by other countries, the more princes would flock to the open contest in which a princess would choose her husband, as was the case when, as the *Sejarah Melayu* tells us, Gajah Mada held one in Majapahit.²⁴ The *Sejarah Melayu* also tells us that the ruler of Majapahit was married to the daughter of the king of Tanjungpura, a brother of the ancestor of the rulers of Melaka²⁵ — thus implying that the rulers of Melaka and those of Majapahit were of equal status — and that Sultan Mansur Syah of Melaka went to Majapahit to ask for the hand of a Majapahit

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 158.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 159-64.

²² C.C. Brown, 'The Malay Annals', *JMBRAS*, 25, ii, iii (1952) pp. 74-5.

²³ J.J. Ras, *Hikayat Banjar, A Study in Malay Historiography* (The Hague, 1968) pp. 424-5.

²⁴ Brown, pp. 74-5.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 32.

princess, and with her the suzerainty over Indragiri and Siantan.²⁶ In the *Hikayat Banjar*, Lambu Mangkurat went to Majapahit to ask for one of the sons of the king of Majapahit to marry Putri Junjung Buih, the queen of Negara Dipa; but on his arrival he was told by the king that all his children were already married: his eldest son had been given in marriage to Palembang, the second to Bali, and the youngest to Surabaya; his eldest daughter had been married off to Minangkabau, the second daughter to Banten, and the youngest to Makasar. Fortunately, there was still another son of the king of Majapahit who was available for the young queen of Negara Dipa, and from their marriage were born two sons who became the ancestors of the rulers of Banjarmasin.²⁷

However, although many Malay princes and princesses were – according to Malay chronicles – married to Majapahit princesses and princes, there was never any claim on their part to be heirs of the kingdom of Majapahit. They would, at most, use the marriage to stake a claim over a relatively small area, as in the case of Sultan Mansur Syah's marriage; or to show the noble origin of a ruling dynasty of a certain country, as in the *Hikayat Banjar* – not unlike the role of Iskandar dzul Karnain in the *Sejarah Melayu*. In fact, behind this veneer of admiration, or awe, towards Majapahit, the grudge against this Javanese power is quite obvious. If they were defeated by the Javanese army, it was not because the Javanese, as a person, was more powerful and intelligent than the Malay; on the contrary, the Malays were always too clever for the Javanese – as was obvious from the exploits of Hang Tuah in Majapahit,²⁸ or the defeat the Javanese suffered at the hands of the Minangkabaus.²⁹ Pasai and Singapura were not conquered by Majapahit because the Javanese fought better or were more courageous than the Malays, but because they had more numerous soldiers and because they were helped by people from other lands,³⁰ or by Malay traitors.³¹

Thus we have a paradox that, on the one hand, the Mataram rulers claimed to be the heirs of the great kingdom of Majapahit, but the Javanese chronicles painted Majapahit in sombre colours and not-so-large a canvas, while, on the other hand, the Malays who had every reason to harbour a grudge against Majapahit presented a more colourful and expansive picture of it in their chronicles, a picture which to a certain extent is reminiscent of that given by Prapanca in his *Nagarakrtagama*.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 76-84.

²⁷ Ras, pp. 290 ff.

²⁸ Brown, pp. 78-84.

²⁹ Hill, pp. 161-4, 170-1.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

³¹ Brown, pp. 50-1.

As for the *Nagarakrtagama*, it seems most unlikely that the authors of the Malay chronicles had any knowledge of it at all. As we have noted, Prapanca completed his poem in 1365. The fact that the only extant manuscript of this poem is a copy made in 1740 seems to indicate that it was not widely known and perhaps not highly appreciated by Prapanca's contemporaries, nor by subsequent generations.³² Until 1894, it was virtually unknown to the world outside the royal compound in Cakranegara, Lombok, and no doubt it would have remained there — or been irrevocably lost — had not the government of the Netherlands East Indies sent Dr J. Brandes, a government philologist, to join a military expedition engaged in the Lombok War, with a view to preserve from destruction all objects of cultural interest, especially manuscripts.³³

Both the expedition and Brandes' mission were success stories. By its conquest of Lombok, the new 'empire' of the Netherlands East Indies now covered almost the whole of Prapanca's Majapahit empire, and Brandes succeeded in collecting many valuable manuscripts.³⁴ But it was an irony of history that the success of Brandes' mission brought with it a by-product that later helped to undermine the very success of the whole undertaking. Had Brandes not come in time to save the manuscripts from destruction — one of which was the only manuscript of the *Nagarakrtagama* — our image of Majapahit would have remained basically the same as the one presented in the *Babad Tanah Jawi*, perhaps slightly modified by the publication of the *Pararaton* in 1896.

The discovery and the subsequent publication of the *Nagarakrtagama* changed the picture radically. As we have noted, the picture of Majapahit presented by Prapanca was one of prosperity and perpetual glory. The *Nagarakrtagama* relates briefly the history of the kingdom, elaborates the glorious present, and, as a matter of course, does not have anything to say about the end of the empire, which took place more than a century after the completion of this poem.

More important than the picture itself, however, was the credibility of the sources that supplied the picture. As studies in ancient Javanese history and culture, using the information from the inscriptions and Old Javanese literature, yielded more and more results which tended to disprove the accounts occurring in the *Babad Tanah Jawi*, the *Serat Kanda* and the like, the value of the latter fell sharply in the eyes of Western scholars and their indigenous

³² See Pigeaud, Vol. IV, pp. 337-8, 548; Zoetmulder, pp. 354-5. For a different opinion, see C.C. Berg, *Maya's Hemelvaart in het Javaanse Buddhisme; IA, Lalitawistara-Traditie op Java* (Amsterdam, Noord-Hollandsche, 1969) p. 338.

³³ See Pigeaud, Vol. I, p. xi; C.C. Berg, 'The Work of Professor Krom' in D.G.E. Hall (ed.), *Historians of South East Asia* (London, O.U.P., 1961) pp. 165-6.

³⁴ For these manuscripts, the so-called Lombok collection, see Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java, Catalogue Raisonné of Javanese Manuscripts in the Library of the University of Leiden and Other Publications in the Netherlands* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1967-70) Vol. II, pp. 252-320.

students. The *Nagarakrtagama* and inscriptions, on the other hand, had been accepted as an essentially reliable source of information about the Javanese past. After the appearance of Kern's translation of the *Nagarakrtagama* in a series of articles in the *BKI* between 1905 and 1914, Majapahit was, for all practical purposes, Prapanca's Majapahit, supplemented by the accounts from the *Pararaton* and inscriptions. It did not take long for the results of the scholarly studies of Majapahit and Indo-Javanese history in general to gain entry into the classic work of Professor Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis*,³⁵ and into various text-books for high schools.³⁶ From there, it was but a small step to the full acceptance of this new and brighter picture of Majapahit by the emerging elite of Western-educated Indonesians.³⁷

It is, perhaps, more than a coincidence that it was during the period of the rebirth of Prapanca's Majapahit that Budi Utomo, the first embodiment of the Javanese national awakening, was founded in 1908 — a decade after the publication of the *Pararaton*, three years after the first instalment of Kern's articles on the *Nagarakrtagama*. Initially this organization sought the stimulation and advancement of the Javanese people only,³⁸ but this regionalism soon gave way to the idea of one Indonesia covering the whole of the Netherlands East Indies, the idea which was shared by other regional-based associations. And what better model for this one Indonesia which was free and united than the great Majapahit, the *real* Majapahit which had just been brought back to life by the labour of great scholars like Brandes, Kern and Krom, and the expanse of which coincided with, or was even larger than, the Netherlands Indies?³⁹

³⁵ Krom, pp. 14, 19-20; cf. Berg, pp. 166 ff.

³⁶ One of the earliest of these textbooks was W. Fruin-Mees, *Geschiedenis van Java* (Weltevreden Batavia, Commissie voor de Volkslectuur, 1919 1st ed., 1922 2nd ed.) Vol. I. For other textbooks, see M. Ali, 'Historical Problems' in *Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*, pp. 1-2; see also Reid's paper below.

³⁷ It should be stressed here, however, that this new Western-trained elite constituted only a minute part of the Javanese population, and its influence on the formation of the image of the Javanese past was, at least until the collapse of Dutch rule in Indonesia, negligible. For the great majority of the Javanese people, which was hardly touched by the education system introduced by the colonial government, the traditional image of Majapahit remained unchanged. While the members of the new elite acquired an image of Majapahit from reading the textbooks written by their Dutch teachers based on Prapanca's accounts, the bulk of the Javanese people continued to read — or, more aptly, listen to the reading of — the *babad* and to attend the *ketoprak* (folk-drama) performances which were usually based on episodes from the *babad*.

³⁸ See R. van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague, W. van Hoeve, 1960) p. 56; see also Reid's paper below.

³⁹ In this respect the Dutch-educated Indonesians were merely echoing the words of their teachers, who seemed to take great pleasure in pointing out that the extent of the territories under the suzerainty of Majapahit was almost the same as that under the Netherlands Indies. See, for example, Fruin-Mees, Vol. I, 2nd ed., p. 91; Krom, p. 418; cf. G.J. Resink, *Indonesia's History between the Myths, Essays in Legal History and Historical Theory* (The Hague, W. van Hoeve, 1968) pp. 152-3.

Some 'minor' adjustments, however, were necessary for this Javanese kingdom to be accepted as the symbol for new Indonesia. The most important was the elimination of the distinction between Java and Nusantara. The latter, which in the Old Javanese sources means the 'other islands', that is islands other than the land of Java, was now given a new meaning, something like 'nusa di antara dua benua' (islands between two continents), or the Archipelago, which included both Java and other islands. In this way, fourteenth century Majapahit could be seen as the golden age of Indonesia, the culmination of the urge for unity which had always existed throughout the course of history, and Gajah Mada could be seen as a national hero whose untiring efforts made it possible to achieve this unity.⁴⁰

A factor which probably made it easier for non-Javanese to accept Majapahit as the symbol for Indonesia was another important discovery in the field of Indonesian studies. This time it was not just a discovery of one particular manuscript, but of a whole great kingdom of the past that had been completely forgotten by later generations. In 1918, George Coedès published one of his most important contributions to the study of Indonesian history, in which he proved beyond doubt the existence of Sriwijaya long before the emergence of Majapahit.⁴¹ This new discovery was quickly taken up as another symbol of the glorious past by the leaders of the national movements, and as this new symbol was a Sumatra-based kingdom, it gave the needed balance to deflect criticisms of Javanese domination.

Still, as Sriwijaya left hardly anything to compare with the wealth of inscriptions, monuments and literary works which have come down to us from Majapahit, and ancient Java in general, it was inevitable that Majapahit should remain the more dominant of these twin symbols — even for Sumatrans. Episodes from the Javanese past were favourite themes for many creative writers in the twenties and thirties, as is evident from the plays of Sanusi Pane and Muhammad Yamin.⁴² Yamin's strong passion for Majapahit continued

⁴⁰ Thus according to an article 'Het Rijk van Gadjah Mada', *Wederopbouw*, (1920) pp. 5-6; see also Soemarsono's reviews of Fruin-Mees' history text book *Geschiedenis van Java*, published in the same journal, pp. 83-4. (I am indebted to Dr Anthony Reid who drew my attention to these articles.)

⁴¹ G. Coedès, 'Le Royaume de Crivijaya', *BEFEO*, 18, vi (1918) pp. 1-36.

⁴² See A. Teeuw, *Modern Indonesian Literature* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1967) pp. 27-8; J.G. de Casparis, 'Historical Writing on Indonesia (Early Period)' in *Historians of South East Asia*, p. 149.

throughout his busy life: he wrote a biography of Gajah Mada,⁴³ and his most serious study on the state organization of Majapahit was published posthumously.⁴⁴

Such an enthusiastic acceptance as shown by Yamin, however, was far from universal. Some accepted Majapahit as the symbol of the glorious past, but at the same time pointed out the feudalistic nature of society in those days, or even the evil of its imperialistic expansionism. Even Sukarno, who recognized the importance of promoting the idea of the glorious past as a means of arousing nationalism,⁴⁵ pointed out that 'the imperialism of Sriwijaya which subjugated the surrounding islands', and 'the imperialism of Majapahit which dominated almost the whole Archipelago plus Malaya' were not different from any other forms of imperialism.⁴⁶

Some rejected completely the idea of Majapahit as a symbol for the new Indonesia, maintaining that Indonesia was a new creation, that it had nothing to do with what happened in Indonesia in the past. 'The Indonesian spirit is something new', Takdir Alisjahbana wrote in 1930, 'both in its content and its form. It is not based on the past. The Sriwijaya and Majapahit kingdoms, which in their past glories embraced most parts of the archipelago, were not its *forerunners*, because at that time those conquered peoples did not like the conquerors at all. Both Sriwijaya and Majapahit were completely devoid of the essence of the Indonesian spirit, namely the will to be united which was stimulated by the awareness of common interests and ideals'.⁴⁷

As expected, the Muslim writers and scholars in general showed a great reluctance to accept Majapahit, Sriwijaya and other kingdoms of ancient Java as the symbol for new Indonesia. As there were many Muslim kingdoms of the past as well, why, as a rector of the Islamic University in Yogyakarta put it: 'do we always speak of Majapahit, Kediri and Sriwijaya, whenever we recall

⁴³ For some comments on Yamin's *Gajah Mada, Pahlawan Persatuan nusantara*, see Bambang Utomo, 'Some Remarks on Modern Historiography' in *Historians of South East Asia*, pp. 76-7; and de Casparis, pp. 148-9.

⁴⁴ M. Yamin, *Tatanegara Madjapahit, juitu Risalah Sapta-parwa Bertisi 7 Parwa Hasil Penelitian Ketatanegaraan Indonesia tentang Dasar dan Bentuk Negara Nusantara Bernama Madjapahit 1293-1525*. His passion for Majapahit probably also contributed considerably to the adoption of 'bhinneka tunggal ika' — a phrase quoted from the *Sutasoma*, a work written a few years after the completion of the *Nagarakrtagama* — as the motto of the Republic of Indonesia. See M. Yamin, *Naskah-Persiapan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945* (Jakarta, Prapantja, 1960) Vol. 2, pp. 77-81. See also Noer's paper in this volume.

⁴⁵ Soekarno, *Indonesia Menggugat* (Jakarta, 1956) pp. 118 ff. See also Reid's paper below.

⁴⁶ Soekarno, pp. 16, 31.

⁴⁷ St. Takdir Alisjahbana, 'Menuju Masyarakat dan Kebudayaan Baru' in Achdiat K. Mihardja (ed.), *Polemik Kebudayaan* (Jakarta, Perpustakaan Perguruan Kementerian P.P. dan K., 1954) p. 14.

the glory of the fatherland? Did not the Sultanate of Demak and the Sultanate of Mataram under Sultan Agung resist the Dutch: is that not one of the proofs of the greatness they have left for our people?'⁴⁸ Looking back from the sixties, Dr Mukti Ali, one of the leading Muslim scholars, complained that as a result of the works of Western scholars 'the splendour of the ancient empire of Majapahit with its able Chancellor, Gajah Mada, and its King Hajam Wuruk, or the empire of Kediri and its King Airlangga, were dug up from the most forgotten dust of history... and have become heroic ideals for the young Javanese'.⁴⁹

Such a complaint made in the sixties showed that the picture of Majapahit painted by Kern, Krom and other scholars, which had taken its more or less definite shape in the second and third decades of this century, still had, and has, strong influence in the formation of the image of Majapahit among present-day Indonesians. New findings might change a few details, but the main outline of the whole picture remains basically the same as that of more than a half century ago.

The post-war works of Professor Berg⁵⁰ which, had they been accepted, would have changed the whole picture completely, have made little impact so far. The great Majapahit, which up to now is regarded as the *real* Majapahit, would have to be reduced to much smaller dimensions, for according to Berg what is described in the *Nagarakrtagama* was not the real situation but a situation which should have existed in accordance with the doctrine of Great Majapahit prevailing in Prapanca's times. Prapanca's poem is, first of all, a priestly statement, an elaborate optative, which concerns itself with what should be rather than what it is. In other words, the greatness of Majapahit which was eloquently sung and immortalized in this poem was non-existent.

The general reaction of most Indonesians who concerned themselves with the past was one of indignation. Many genuinely believed that Berg's writings — which appeared soon after Indonesia achieved its independence — were written out of spite against the newly born Republic. Most Indonesians who had some training in Old Javanese seemed to feel it was their duty to

⁴⁸ Quoted from A. Mukti Ali, *Alam Pikiran Islam Modern di Indonesia dan Modern Islamic Thought in Indonesia* (Jakarta, Nida, 1969) p. 51.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 20, 41; see also Hamka's views on Majapahit in Noer's paper in this volume.

⁵⁰ As an introduction to Berg's post-war writings, see 'Javanese Historiography — A Synopsis of its Evolution' in *Historians of South East Asian*, pp. 13-23; 'The Work of Professor Krom' in *ibid.*, pp. 164-71; 'The Javanese Picture of the Past' in *Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*, pp. 87-117. For criticisms of Berg's point of view, see F.D.K. Bosch, 'C.C. Berg and Ancient Javanese History', *BKI*, 112 (1956) pp. 1-24; de Casparis, pp. 159-60; P.J. Zoetmulder, 'The Significance of the Study of Culture and Religion for Indonesian Historiography' in *Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*, pp. 326-43.

combat what they considered to be fallacies in Berg's arguments.⁵¹ And the most usual comments on Berg's new theories concerning Majapahit among the Indonesians were something like: 'Well, what do you expect from a Dutchman?' or comments such as those reported by de Casparis.⁵²

Nevertheless, Berg's writings have, to a certain degree, left their mark — even if only a question mark — on the picture of Majapahit in the minds of those familiar with his complex and everchanging theories and hypotheses. In fact, even now many Indonesians who, like Takdir Alisjahbana some four decades ago, believed that Indonesia was a new creation which had nothing to do with Sriwijaya and Majapahit, have shown more readiness to accept Berg's new findings. To mention only two of the most prominent Indonesian intellectuals who readily accepted Berg's views on the Javanese past, Resink and Soedjatmoko have repeatedly applauded Berg, who 'has made a valuable contribution . . . in that he has opened the question of how valid Krom's theory of the process of Hinduization in Java is',⁵³ or who 'was trying to reduce the grandiose image of Greater Majapahit to smaller dimensions',⁵⁴ despite its more or less official status in Indonesia.

How far this image of Great Majapahit will be modified by these assaults will depend, to a great extent, not on the correctness or incorrectness of the picture one gains from the differing interpretations of various sources — the chronicles, the *Nagarakrtagama* et cetera — but rather, I suspect, on the degree of unity and stability achieved in present-day Indonesia. The more the *tunggal* (unity) becomes a reality, the less the need for a symbol of unity; and the less the fear that *bhinna* (diversity) will lead to disintegration, the less the need for a symbol of stability and greatness from the remote past. It is only when this kind of symbol is no longer needed that Indonesians will be capable of perceiving an image of Majapahit which is neither greater nor smaller than the *real* Majapahit of the Javanese past. Although one perhaps should not be over-optimistic in this respect, for in a country where — as Professor Benda puts it neatly — 'appearances matter more than (or as much as) substance, what is really "real"?'⁵⁵

⁵¹ See, for instance, Slametmuljana, 'Adakah Prapantja sungguh pujangga keraton?', *Bahasa dan Budaya*, 1, ii (1952) pp. 14-22; Sutjipto Wirjosuparto, 'Prapantja sebagai penulis sedjarah', *Penelitian Sedjarah*, 1, i (1960) pp. 15-20; S. Supomo, 'Tugas penulis babad dan pelaksanaannya' in *Laporan Kongres Ilmu Pengetahuan Nasional Kedua 1962*, (Jakarta, Madjelis Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia, 1965) Vol. 6, pp. 9-36.

⁵² See de Casparis, p. 154.

⁵³ Soedjatmoko, *An Approach to Indonesian Historiography: towards an Open Future*, (Cornell Modern Indonesia Project) (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1960) p. 14. See also his article, 'The Indonesian Historian and His Time' in *Introduction to Indonesian Historiography*, esp. pp. 404-5.

⁵⁴ Resink, p. 152.

⁵⁵ H.J. Benda, review on G.J. Resink's *Indonesia's History between the Myths* in *JSEAS*, 1, ii (1970) p. 135.

THE OPTIONS CLOSE FOR THE COURT TRADITION

Royal courts continued to flourish in many parts of Southeast Asia after the establishment of effective European dominance, but their literature appeared to decline both in quantity and quality. The two following papers examine the reasons of this decline in terms of Javanese and Cambodian court traditions. The exceptional liveliness and perception of Purwasastra's chronicle of the Balambangan Wars stemmed from a court in a time of change, when vital choices had to be made between rival political alliances and social models. The Dutch in this chronicle are neither mythologized nor ignored, but their peculiar strengths and weaknesses are noted. Courts whose options were closed off by Western domination, like that of Monivong under the French, tended to lose their appetite for serious discussion of the past.

JAVANESE HISTORIOGRAPHY IN AND OF THE 'COLONIAL PERIOD': A CASE STUDY

Ann Kumar

Why do men write histories? We professional practitioners tend to assume that ours is a legitimate and even a natural occupation until we come to study a place-and-time where it has manifestly not been a significant interest of the literate class. In concluding the Canberra symposium, Professor Wolters suggested that for the most part in Southeast Asia the dominant preoccupations lay elsewhere: in religion. Paradoxically, however, it was precisely the religious or moral preoccupation that in many civilizations initiated an interest in history, however much this craft was secularized later. One has only to think of the Christian desire to understand and demonstrate a historical Providence; the Muslim concern for the pure transmission through time of Muhammad's teachings; the Theravada concern for the observance within the *sangha* of the decisions of the Councils;¹ the Confucian view of history as a gallery of good and bad examples held up to the current ruler to illustrate the precepts he must follow.² The function (or lack of it) of historiography within the total cultural framework presents a complex subject for investigation, and the Indonesian case is particularly interesting in that we find here two periods of very little attention, in so far as we can quantify it, to the study of history, on either side of a dividing period of apparently much more lively interest. Of the total surviving literature of the Indianized kingdoms, only one or two works can at all be described as histories,³ and though the number of historical works written in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries can certainly multiply that figure a hundredfold,⁴ it is still a relatively small corpus. Between

¹ See Craig Reynolds, in this volume.

² See David Marr, in this volume.

³ I refer here to the *Pararaton* and *Nagarakrtagama*, which appear to be the only candidates for inclusion in this category, although the circumstance that both these texts were preserved only *outside* Java suggests that the survival rate for historical works may have been lower than that for other literature (because of the demise of the patron dynasty, etc.)

⁴ Including, that is, all works seeking to analyse the past or set within a historical framework, however diverse their philosophical bases, methodologies, and intended audiences. They range from a small number of 'traditionalist' histories drawing heavily on *wayang* mythology (principally Ronggowarsita's history of the kings of Java) through an equally small number of autobiographies by *priyayi* in contact with the Dutch through the civil service, such as Achmad Djajadiningrat, *Herinneringen* (Amsterdam, G. Kolff, [1936]) and Margono Djojo-hadikusumo, *Herinneringen uit 3 tijdperken* (Amsterdam, G. Nabrink, 1970), to a notably larger number of nationalist histories, such as Sanusi Pane, *Sedjarah Indonesia* (Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1965), and *pahlawan* biographies; with a few dissertations on the place of history in Indonesian nation-building, for example, Roeslan Abdulgani, *Penggunaan Ilmu Sedjarah* (Jakarta, Prapantja, [1963]), and Marxist analyses as presented by Tan Malaka in *Madilog, Materialisme, Dialektika, Logika* (Jakarta, Widjaja, 1951), *Massa-Actie* (Jakarta, Poestaka Moerba, 1947) and *Pandangan Hidup* (Jakarta, Widjaja, 1952), as well as by D.N. Aidit — see paper by R. McVey in this volume.

these two comparative lows stretches the period associated with the civilization of Islam, and which produced those numerous *sejarah*, *silsilah*, *hikayat*, and *babad* that crowd the pages of catalogues of Malay and Javanese manuscripts. In time, historiography follows upon the introduction of Islam: *post hoc, ergo propter hoc*?

A simple explanation in these terms must at least be modified sufficiently to account for certain apparent anomalies: on the one hand the fact that much of the Javanese historiography, though chronologically post-Islamic, appears to use for its framework an Indo-Javanese rather than Muslim mythology and organization of time⁵ and in its frequent invoking of the supernatural as a causal factor contrasts with the generally 'disenchanted' character of historical writing from other parts of the Muslim world, and declines rather than increases in volume in the course of the nineteenth century when commitment to Islam was arguably growing both in breadth and in depth; and on the other hand the development of a reasonably prolific Balinese historiography, contemporaneous with but apparently not inspired by the spread of Islam. This corpus of material from Bali includes both the works usually categorized as 'Middle Javanese', since they are written in the Javanese language, and later Balinese language histories, notably the nineteenth century 'Rusak' or 'Uug' genre — works from different Balinese centres treating a common theme: the ending of the principality's autonomy with the coming of the Dutch.⁶

It seems reasonable to conclude that social developments — especially perhaps the effect of social crisis noted by Wang Gungwu in his introductory remarks⁷ — are as significant as religious ones in producing new attitudes to the past, although the two should not be seen as operating separately, but rather in interaction. In this paper I have chosen to concentrate on a reasonably well-defined socio-political unit which was at a certain period in its history opened up to a number of new world-views, among them the Islamic, in a process which also entailed a particularly high degree of social violence, and to consider firstly, what sort of historiography this period produced, and secondly, the problems which the historical interpretation of the period might involve for contemporary historians.

⁵ The best English-language introduction to the interpretation of the mythic and temporal frameworks found in the Central Javanese dynastic *babad* is M.C. Ricklefs, *Jogjakarta under Sultan Mangkubumi, 1749-1792* (London, O.U.P., 1974), esp. ch. VII. C.C. Berg, *Het Rijk van de Vijfvoudige Buddha* (Amsterdam, Noorde-Hollandsche Uitg., 1962) gives a more detailed account of the apparent persistence of Javanist-Buddhist cyclical schemes of dynastic history.

⁶ On the 'Middle Javanese' works see C.C. Berg, *De Middel-Javanische Historische Traditie* (Santport, C.A. Mees, 1927); and for an example of a *babad* dealing with the end of one Balinese principality, see P.J. Worsley's edition of the *Babad Buleleng* (Bibliotheca Indonesica, no. 8) (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1972).

⁷ See Wang Gungwu, in this volume.

The kingdom of Balambangan occupied the easternmost 'slice' of the island of Java, being centred in the Banyuwangi district and extending westward to somewhere about the regions of Besuki in the north and Puger in the south. For much of its history, Balambangan could be described as a border zone, drawn into either Central Javanese or Balinese empires according to the relative strength of the Javanese and Balinese kingdoms. Thus during the first half of the seventeenth century, suzerainty over Balambangan was contested by its two considerably more powerful neighbours, the Balinese principality of Gelgel and the Javanese state of Mataram, and enforced on numerous occasions by military expeditions. During the period from about 1670 to 1690, however, there was a rather exceptional coincidence of weakness in the Central Javanese state and an absence of any really strong principality on Bali. The ruler of Balambangan at the time was Tawangalun, whose long reign was afterwards remembered as a sort of golden age – perhaps an indication that it was at this time that a sense of an identity distinct from either Central Java or Bali developed in Balambangan. After Tawangalun's death in 1690, however, the succession was disputed by three of his sons, who were divided over the question of whether to ally with the VOC or with the 'rebel' Surapati, whose capital was at Pasuruhan and who was then the chief thorn in the side of the VOC in Java. Subsequently, in 1697, the Balinese principality of Buleleng allied with Surapati to send an expedition (which included Makasarese troops) to Balambangan, and installed another candidate as vassal ruler, under the dual suzerainty of Buleleng and Pasuruhan.⁸ This ruler seems to have sought some leverage against his overlords by putting out feelers both to Buleleng's Balinese rival, Klungkung, and to the VOC, but in 1726, when Buleleng lost its war with Mengwi, Balambangan was handed over to this state as its vassal. In 1736 a minor, Pangeran Patih (II), was put on the throne.⁹ During his reign north Balambangan suffered greatly from the depredations of Madurese war parties in search of booty and men.

In 1734, by the terms of van Imhoff's contract with Mataram,¹⁰ that state transferred to the VOC its claims to sovereignty over the part of Java east of the meridian passing through Pasuruhan. After this point, therefore, Balambangan found itself squeezed between the Balinese principality of Mengwi and not Mataram, but the Company which had inherited Mataram's economic and political interests in a more centralized control. The mountainous and inaccessible regions of East Java sheltered various groups which had in one way or

⁸ See my *Surapati, Man and Legend: A Study of Three Babad Traditions* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1976) p. 36.

⁹ This is the name he is given in the *babad* under consideration, although he was also known as Pangeran Danuningrat, Pangeran Mangkuningrat and Pangeran Jingga.

¹⁰ See H.J. de Graaf, *Geschiedenis van Indonesië* ('s-Gravenhage, W. van Hoeve, 1949) pp. 259-60.

another come into conflict with the VOC: Chinese who had found refuge there after the troubles of 1740 and the following years; the descendants of Surapati, in Malang and Lumajang; pirate Buginese; 'smugglers', and so on.

In Balambangan itself, a quarrel developed between Pangeran Patih, the ruler, and Wong Agung Wilis, his half brother by a Balinese mother. When in 1763 Pangeran Patih was summoned to Mengwi by his overlord, he took fright, fled to Pasuruhan and sought help from the VOC, but the Governor-General, van der Parra, decided against intervention, and as a result Pangeran Patih had no option but to allow himself to be taken to Mengwi with his half-brother. Here he was eventually put to death, being replaced as ruler of Balambangan by two Balinese deputies, Gusti Ngurah Ktut Kaba-Kaba and Gusti Kuta-bedah.

Under their rule, English traders began to call in to Balambangan, bringing opium, fire-arms and textiles in exchange for provisions, teak and birds' nests.¹¹ Chinese and Mandarese were also active in 'smuggling', and fear of the English threat spurred the VOC on to clean up the unruly 'Oosthoek', a campaign which began early in 1767. Two relatives of Pangeran Patih, Mas Anom and Mas Weka, went over to the VOC; Kuta-bedah was killed; Ngurah Ktut Kaba-Kaba and his family and followers ended their lives in a *puputan* (suicidal attack). Ulu Pampang (now Tratas, on the bay of Pampang) was conquered and a fort built there. The next stronghold to fall to the VOC was Malang (which was, strictly speaking, under the Sunan's authority according to the 1743 agreement) followed by Lumajang, Ngantang and Porong.

In Balambangan, Wilis had now returned from Bali. He sought acceptance from the VOC, but as time passed the Company became increasingly anxious about his following of Chinese, Buginese, Mandarese and Balinese, and his liberality in dispensing money and weapons. A thousand Madurese — the VOC's toughest though usually least disciplined troops in its Balambangan campaigns — were stationed in the principality. Eventually a new conflict broke out in which Mas Anom and Mas Weka, though they had been installed as regents by the VOC, joined Wilis against the Company. All were in the event captured and exiled, and two new regents were installed. These were persuaded to accept Islam, a measure envisaged as a means of severing the ties with Bali which the VOC considered the greatest source of trouble. A draconian military regime was initiated, under which all rice and provisions were commandeered or, where this was not possible, burnt, leading to widespread famine. Unpaid forced labour was used to build the fortifications.

¹¹ See van der Parra's 1766 report to the Governors of the VOC, published in J.K.J. de Jonge (ed.), *De Opkomst van het Nederlandsch Gezag in Oost Indie* ('s-Gravenhage, Nijhoff, 1862-88) Vol. XI, p. 56.

In May 1771, it was discovered that the new regents, who had fought with the VOC in the previous conspiracy against the Company, were now conspiring with Mengwi to launch an invasion of Balambangan. They were dismissed, and another regent, Jaksanegara, began an unpopular rule. Yet a third conspiracy was discovered within a short time and nipped in the bud. By now the European garrison was decimated by the frightful mortality of this 'white man's grave' and the native population by the starvation which resulted from the measures taken for their subjugation; but the worst part of the nightmare was still to unfold. It began with the appearance of a certain Rempek, whose cause was supported by influential *ajar* (teachers and practitioners of the old religious disciplines) and who came to be regarded as an incarnation of Wong Agung Wilis. There was at first no Balinese assistance — that came later, from Badung, Karangasem and Klungkung — and Muslims as well as 'heathens' joined Rempek. Hundreds of households moved bodily to Bayu to rally to him, troops deserted, the uprising spread from east Balambangan to west Balambangan, with thousands of rebels sweeping through the land. The VOC brought in all the troops it could muster — 1,000 from Madura, soldiers from the Batavia, Surabaya, Pasuruhan, Surakarta and Jogjakarta garrisons, the crack dragoons of Semarang. Even so, a full year of fighting, with great losses and terrible atrocities on both sides, lay ahead before the scorched-earth policy of the VOC brought the land to stillness. Afterwards yet another new regent was installed, and a new fort (Utrecht) and capital set up at Banyuwangi. But to rule over what? The surviving Balambangers had fled to Bali, to Nusa Barong (from which they and the Balinese and Buginese sea-raiders based here were evicted in 1777) or to the jungles and mountains — from which they emerged once again in 1781 to support a second 'pseudo Wilis' who was not, however, a serious threat.¹² Attempts to settle Javanese migrants in the depopulated countryside, whether by inducement or by compulsion, were unsuccessful: even criminals and prostitutes fled the land, or took to living by plunder. A Mandarese colony given permission to settle also took to piracy, and had to be rounded up and deported. More success was obtained with Madurese colonization, which spread out over Besuki and through Bondowoso and Jember. Agricultural production increased slowly, yielding a little rice, indigo, coffee, cardamon and wood. Apart from these and the income from the birds' nests, only the sulphur of the temperamental Mount Ijen was of much profit to the Company; and even that had to be off-set against the destruction caused by its 1817 eruption.¹³

¹² A more serious conspiracy to murder the Dutch garrison and bring in the Balinese, probably at the instigation of the principality of Jembrana and possibly with English assistance, had to be rooted out as late as 1797. On the events of the years 1767-1777, see de Jonge, XI, pp. ii-xxv, and C. Lekkerkerker, 'Balambangan', *Indische Gids*, 45th year, 2 (1923) pp. 1030-67.

¹³ See Lekkerkerker, 'Balambangan', pp. 1060 ff.

As C.J. Bosch observed, writing from Bondowoso in 1848,¹⁴ this region is perhaps the only one in Java where a once numerous population was entirely wiped out. By far the greater part of the area's present-day population dates from after Bosch's time, from the period when the development of large agricultural enterprises (particularly of sugar) brought about a heavy immigration from Central Java and Madura. This seems to have reached its peak in the early twentieth century. According to the figures of the 1930 census,¹⁵ almost half of the inhabitants of Banyuwangi, the heart of the old kingdom, had been born elsewhere, and no other regency on Java showed such a high percentage of immigrants. In most of Java east of Pasuruhan and Lumajang, the majority of the population is Madurese; the exceptions are south Jember — south Banyuwangi where people of Central Javanese origin predominate, Puger, Wuluhan and Genteng, and some cities.¹⁶ In 1930 the descendants of the old Balambangers, the 'Usingers', of Banyuwangi and Jember regencies, numbered 179, 579 out of a total population of 1,406,444.¹⁷ According to Lekkerkerker, they were still distinguished by their self-respect, honesty, obstinacy, and an unwillingness to enter into the service of Europeans.¹⁸

This cursory survey sufficiently reveals the violence of the social crisis accompanying the end of the old order in Balambangan. This period is also remarkable for the number of historical works it produced, works which exhibit widely divergent political loyalties and interpretations. Of those that survive, one consists of genealogies of the royal house of Balambangan and related East Javanese noble houses, combined with a version of the career of Surapati and his relationship with the VOC.¹⁹ A second gives an overall account of the Dutch conquest of easternmost Java (including not only Balambangan but also Lumajang, Malang, and adjacent regions).²⁰ Thirdly, a group of closely related Balambangan dynastic chronicles from the nineteenth century provide a brief survey of the kingdom's history from a particular point of view.²¹ Lastly,

¹⁴ C.J. Bosch, 'Aanteekeningen over de Afdeeling Bondowoso (Residentie Bezoeki)', *TBG*, 6 (1857) pp. 469-508.

¹⁵ *Volkstelling 1930*, deel 3, *Inheemsche Bevolking van Oost-Java*, (Batavia, Department van Economische Zaken, Landsdrukkerij, 1934) p. 26.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 16. Since censuses no longer include information on *suku* or language groups, it is not possible to ascertain whether the relativity of Madurese to Javanese has altered since 1930.

¹⁷ *Volkstelling 1930*, deel 3, pp. 17, 120.

¹⁸ Lekkerkerker, 'Balambangan', p. 1031.

¹⁹ See my *Surapati*, pp. 147-66, 155-75.

²⁰ See Th. Pigeaud, *Literature of Java* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1967) Vol. II, p. 83 (LOR 2185); A.C. Vreede, *Catalogus van de Javaansche en Madoereesche Handschriften der Leidsche Universiteitsbibliotheek* (Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1892) pp. 119-122; and J. Brandes, 'Een Verslag van Professor A.C. Vreede omtrent eene verzameling Javaansche en Madoereesche handschriften', *TBG*, 25 (1893) pp. 443-79.

²¹ See Pigeaud, *Literature*, II, p. 191 (LOR 4087 and 4088); J. Brandes 'Verslag over een Babad Balambangan', *TBG*, 27, pp. 325-65; *idem*, 'Nalezing op het verslag over een Babad Balambangan', *TBG*, 28, pp. 283-95; Th. Pigeaud, 'Aanteekeningen betreffende den Javaanschen Oosthoek', *TBG*, 72, (1932) pp. 215-313.

there are three nineteenth century histories of particular regions: a Bayu history, written in 1826, dealing with the Dutch and Madurese expedition to the interior of Banyuwangi to subdue the 'pseudo-Wilis' (Rempek) in 1771,²² a text containing notes on the Muslim community in Banyuwangi, the building of a new central mosque in 1843, and the Dutch expedition to Bali in 1847, as well as a short account of one of Muhammad's wars against an infidel king;²³ and a history of Besuki written in 1849, dealing with the Madurese settlement of the region and its history during the period dominated by Chinese rentiers and administrators.²⁴

In this paper I will discuss the content of the second *babad* listed above, contrasting it where possible with the interpretation of events offered by the nineteenth century dynastic chronicles.²⁵ Its author, who identifies himself as Purwasastra, says also that he is 'from Probolinggo' a north-coast port which was in the area ceded to the VOC by Susuhunan Pakubuwana of Mataram by the treaty of 11 November 1743 with Governor-General van Imhoff. At this time Probolinggo (which was until c.1770 known by its old name of Banger, 'stinking') was governed by Kyai Jayalalana, apparently a son of Kyai Bun Jaladriya of Pasuruhan.²⁶ He was thus the first 'Regent' to govern in the name of the VOC rather than of the Sunan; but in 1768, at the height of the conflict between the VOC and Balambangan, he was dismissed from his position and imprisoned. Probolinggo was an important base in the war against Balambangan, for which purpose it was furnished with a small *benteng*: it was after all only about fifty kilometres to Lumajang, a hostile centre under Surapati's son Kartanegara. The reason for Jayalalana's dismissal and imprisonment is not clear: had he perhaps entered into dealings with the enemy? His successor, Raden Tumenggung Jayanegara, son of RT Candranegara, the senior Regent of Surabaya,²⁷ was

²² See Pigeaud, *Literature*, II, p. 191 (LOr 4090). The author of this text was an inhabitant of Lumajang, but his account gives the most credit to the troops from Sumenep (as opposed to Bangkalan).

²³ See Pigeaud, *Literature*, II, p. 191 (LOr 4089). This text is intrinsically very interesting, but will not be discussed here.

²⁴ See Pigeaud, *Literature*, II, p. 83 (LOr 2186); Vreede, pp. 123-6. On the Chinese regents and rentiers of this area, see H. Sutherland, 'Notes on Java's Regent Families, Part I', *Indonesia*, 16 (1973) pp. 145-6.

²⁵ Using for this group LOr 4087, of the Leiden University collection (see Pigeaud, *Literature*, II, p. 191).

²⁶ On the local history of Probolinggo, see J.G.W. Lekkerkerker, 'Probolinggo, Geschiedenis en Overlevering', *Het Nederlandsche Java Instituut, Mededeeling* no. 9, pp. 1-32; and R.T.A. Nitinegoro (comp.), *Pringetan adanja Boepati-Boepati di Negri Probolinggo molai djaman doeloe kala* (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Kern Collection, no. 49). Nitinegoro was appointed Regent (Bupati) of Probolinggo in 1916.

²⁷ On Candranegara and the senior and junior Regents of Surabaya (*bupati sepuh*, *bupati anom*) see Sutherland, p. 142.

Regent for thirty-seven years, during which time he proved a loyal ally of the VOC and increased the amount of the *contingenten* (rice, indigo, bird's nests) delivered to the Company. About Purwasastra himself I have been unable to find any information, but it is illuminating to bear in mind the circumstances in which he wrote — Probolinggo's strategic importance and the replacement by the VOC of a dubious Regent by one fully committed to the Company — in reading his account of the conquest of easternmost Java.

Balambangan and the 'great powers': Mengwi and the VOC

Purwasastra begins with an account of the Pangeran Patih — Wong Agung Wilis conflict. Although remarking that Pangeran Patih was to be pitied because he was still a heathen, unconverted to Islam,²⁸ he nevertheless presents this, the last ruler of the old Balambangan line, as pure and blameless — if rather ineffective in action — and ill-served by his ministers, who govern badly. Wilis, on the other hand, is depicted as covertly building up a following among the common people and the army, his popularity with the latter being summarily explained in the comment *dasar bala brai dunya* (of course the army are always out for goods).²⁹ Feeling threatened by Wilis's actions, Pangeran Patih seeks help from the Dutch, but his request is eventually turned down by the Governor-General and he is politely but firmly brought to Bali by the minions of his overlord Gusti Agung Cokorda, who is displeased that he has gone for help to the *Kumpeni*. The Cokorda asks Wilis to take over as ruler of Balambangan, but Wilis replies that he could not do so while his brother was alive, a remark which the Cokorda interprets as a covert request that Pangeran Patih be killed. He says nothing to Wilis, but does indeed have Pangeran Patih put to death. Purwasastra offers no explanation as to why the Cokorda did not, in fact, then make Wilis ruler of Balambangan, but installed instead the two Balinese deputies (Gusti Ngurah Ktut Kaba-Kaba and Gusti Kuta-Bedah) referred to above.

Taking the author's presentation of the course of events in its entirety, Wilis emerges as a somewhat ambiguous figure, building up strength yet never moving openly against his brother — refusing indeed to accept the throne when his brother offers it to him, and on several occasions professing fraternal affection.

This presentation of the Pangeran Patih — Wilis conflict differs from that given in the nineteenth century *babad*.³⁰ Here, Pangeran Patih is by no means such a blameless character: although the Cokorda has ordered that Wilis be made *patih*, he chooses instead one of his own sons, Sutajiwa; and when the latter becomes involved in a quarrel over fighting crickets with the Balinese *agul-agul*³¹

²⁸ LOr 2185, Canto 1, Stanza 9.

²⁹ LOr 2185, Canto 1, Stanza 16.

³⁰ LOr 4087, pp. 29-41.

³¹ 'Steadfast, heroic, first in battle': military title.

Rangga Setata, he has Rangga Setata killed. Wilis, on the other hand, is presented as a person of great popularity and supernatural power who, shamed by being passed over for the office of *patih*, retires to the sea-coast to practise asceticism. When a Buginese army of 800 men arrives and threatens the capital, the army commander tells Pangeran Patih that he would feel strong enough to engage the Buginese only if Wilis were fighting at his side. He is sent to obtain Wilis's help, which Wilis initially refuses, saying: 'I, Singamumpuni, am powerless to do anything, because I am a low and poor person. I would like those who have the position, the name, the yellow umbrella of state, to be asked to destroy the state's foes'. (*Ingsun iki, Singamumpuni, wis ora duwe daya upaya, sawab ing sun wong ala tur papa. Karepingsun kang pada oleh lelungguh, kang pada oleh nama, kang pada payung kuning, dimane dikarsakake nyirnakake satrune negara.*)³² Later he relents, materializes suddenly in the capital, wipes out the Buginese force with the aid of just one companion, and disappears as mysteriously as he had come. Finally, when Pangeran Patih is summoned to Bali by the Cokorda, he refuses, the author explains, because 'he realized that he had sinned, firstly because he had not carried out his [the Cokorda's] wish to make Wong Agung Wilis *patih*, secondly because he had killed the Balinese officer Rangga Setata' (*sampun ngraos yen gadahi dosa, saprakara wong agung Wilis dikarsakake gawe pangeran patih boten den-lampahi, rong prakara jejeneng saking Bali rongga Setata depun-pejahi*).³³ To sum up the differences between the two interpretations, whereas according to Purwasastra, Pangeran Patih incurred the wrath of his suzerain only after seeking help from the *Kumpeni* on account of the threat posed to him by Wilis, according to the author of the nineteenth century *babad* he sought help from the *Kumpeni* only because he had already incurred the wrath of his suzerain, on account of his own misdeeds.

When he comes to describe the administration of Balambangan from Mengwi, Purwasastra characterizes the rule of the two Balinese deputies as harsh and immoral. They exact new taxes every month, try to find out who is rich so that they can appropriate his goods, do not allow the slightest error on the part of their subjects and, perhaps most notably, no woman is safe with them.³⁴ They are depicted as 'foreign' in their habits — going into battle wearing only loin-cloths and armed with blow-pipes, for instance. Only in death by *puputan* do they command some respect: they have taken what they wanted, and now pay for it. That their officers should go over to the Dutch is the inevitable result of their misrule. In the nineteenth century *babad*, however, their rule is not described as bad, and their officers are depicted as treacherously turning against them when they are hard-pressed in battle against the Dutch.³⁵

³² LOr 4087, pp. 34-5.

³³ LOr 4087, p. 41.

³⁴ See LOr 2185, Canto 10, Stanza 28; Canto 14, Stanza 16.

³⁵ LOr 4087, pp. 43-5.

The Dutch

Purwasastra is noticeably pro-Dutch: although he is sympathetic towards Pangeran Patih and depicts the way in which he lost his throne and was put to death as nothing less than sacrilege, it is nevertheless the Dutch who are the real *prawira* (heroes) of the *babad*. But he does not attempt to make them conform to Javanese models of behaviour – quite the contrary. When Pangeran Patih, no operator, is nerving himself to meet the VOC representative, he asks a fellow Javanese whether it is true that Dutchmen kiss other men's wives, for he will die if they kiss his;³⁶ and when the Dutch envoys rush up to him without any observance of the proper forms, he recoils like a man accosted by a large dog, and has to be reassured that this is just the way of Dutchmen trying to be friendly.³⁷

Throughout the *babad* many occasions are taken to describe the distinctiveness of the Dutch. Although they are sometimes extolled as *satriya* (knights)³⁸ their characteristics are certainly not those of refined aristocrats: they do everything in haste;³⁹ they drink until very drunk;⁴⁰ they are fond of women,⁴¹ they feast on pork⁴² and they are consistently moved by financial

³⁶ LOr 2185, Canto 5, Stanza 34: *Ingkang dadi marasingwang, anging dulurira wadon, amirsa wartaning katah, anadene Welanda, lumrahe gentri angambung, maring rabining wong liyan: Kalakona rabi mami, den-ambunga mring Walanda, pasti mati raganingong, umatur Puspakusuma, datan estu ing werta, wertane wong edan taun . . .* ['My anxiety is about your sisters, I have heard from many people, that the Dutch generally exchange kisses with other people's wives. If it happens that my wives are kissed by the Dutch, I will surely die'. Puspakusuma said, 'What has been said to you is not right, the one who said it was moon-mad . . .']

³⁷ LOr 2185, Canto 5, Stanzas 30-32.

³⁸ See for example the description of the Surabaya Gezaghebber, LOr 2185, Canto 5, Stanzas 6-8: *Wus angrasuk busananeki, Sakeber ing Surabaya, arasukan sutra ijo, rine [n] da pasmen mubyar, sarung kaki pinasang, topine rinenda murub, suremsarining kusuma. Dasare satriya sigit, cahyane saya gumilang, Sakeber Surapringgane, angrasuk ing busana, sanggunging wong ka[ng] samya tumingal, buda kapi estri jalu, yen mulat yekti kasmara. Ing sabrang tan ana tanding, miwah ing tanah Jawa, Sakeber baguse, dasare satriya branyak; pantes santikanira, andap-asor manahipun, tembunge apait kelang.* [He put on his attire, the Gezaghebber of Surabaya, donning a jacket of green silk adorned with glittering laces, he put on his socks, and a hat with glowing lace, making the beauty of the flowers look pale. He was the essence of a handsome warrior, the Gezaghebber of Surabaya, his radiance shining forth ever more brightly. As he put on his attire all who watched, Buddhist unbelievers, men and women, became infatuated by the sight. He had no equal in the lands over the sea or on Java. The Gezaghebber was the perfection of beauty, in truth a dashing warrior, his skill [at arms] befitting him, modest and polite his heart, his speech sweeter than sugar syrup].

³⁹ LOr 2185, Canto 5, Stanza 66.

⁴⁰ See for example, LOr 2185, Canto 11, Stanza 7.

⁴¹ See for example, LOr 2185, Canto 6, Stanzas 23-27, where the unfortunate Pangeran Patih has to deliver up his seven daughters (and three other girls) to the Governor-General, who has just refused his request for help.

⁴² LOr 2185, Canto 14, Stanzas 1-2.

considerations, which are never represented as any part of the calculation of the Javanese actors in the *babad*. Thus Purwasastra relates how the retiring Governor of the north-east coast, leaving Semarang, asks the Bupati to give money for his return journey, and represents, accurately, the presence of the English traders as the immediate reason for the VOC decision to intervene in Balambangan after all.⁴³ As a result of this concern for money, they are enormously rich and live in cities like heaven, the manifold luxuries of which could not be described even in a whole day.⁴⁴

Purwasastra was obviously in a position to be reasonably well informed about the organization of the VOC: much of the *babad* is contained within a framework formed by letters going up the chain of command from the Gezaghebber, ('Sakeber') of Surabaya to the Governor of the north-east coast at Semarang and thence to the Governor-General at Batavia, and letters in reply coming down the line again. He explains such features of VOC organization as might be strange to a Javanese audience — for instance, that officials are replaced every three years, so that all have a turn at ruling and their hearts are as one⁴⁵ (nevertheless, Breton — 'Berton' — the Gezaghebber at Surabaya is understandably angered by being sent away from Java, to Banda, when his term is up).⁴⁶

In general, things are well-ordered under the Dutch; the Gezaghebber's government is respected throughout the coastal area, which is exceedingly prosperous under his rule.⁴⁷ Immediately following this passage is counterposed a description of Balambangan under the Balinese deputies, its inhabitants insecure and oppressed.

Ricklefs' study of *babad* texts led him to conclude that 'the Europeans [as individuals] were perceived in a manner similar to that in which the Javanese saw the *panakawan*, the clown retainers of the *wajang*'.⁴⁸ Purwasastra's treatment of the Dutch suggests that the matter is not so simple. In so far as he

⁴³ LOr 2185, Canto 14.

⁴⁴ LOr 2185, Canto ii, Stanza 2: *dunyané sri narapati, pan negeri Batawiyah, tuhu kutane kumpeni, lir kasyangan angalih, dinulu pating pala[n]cur kita ing Batawiyah, pinageran gedah putih, yen cinaturna sadina mongsa tutuga* [the world of the prince (i.e. the Governor-General of the VOC) is the city of Batavia, which is indeed the Company's fort. It is as if heaven descended. The fort of Batavia has a wall of white ceramic; if I were to tell you about it for a whole day I could not come to the end].

⁴⁵ LOr 2185, Canto 11, Stanza 12.

⁴⁶ LOr 2185, Canto 13, Stanza 24: *Sasampuning moca [maca] surat, Sakeber runtik ing galih, netyane asemu merang, ningali para bupati, yen ngocapa sajruning ati, nora kaya sang aprabu, yen asiha maring wang, mongsa kalakona kami, dyan binucal sangking alam tanah Jawa* [When he had read the letter, the Gezaghebber felt anger in his heart, and his eyes seemed to express shame as he looked at the Bupati, as if he were saying to himself, it is unbelievable that the prince (the Governor-General), if he had any affection for me, would then have thrown me out of the world of Java].

⁴⁷ LOr 2185, Canto 14, Stanza 13.

⁴⁸ Ricklefs, p. 364; see also pp. 28-9, 389.

describes them in traditional (*wayang*) terms, they are *satriya* (knights), not *panakawan*. But as we have seen, they are not *satriya* who conform to the established *wayang* stereotype of restraint, refinement, and aristocratic unworldliness. The question arises as to whether 'the Javanese' were content simply to assign the Dutch to pre-existing literary stereotypes: it seems rather that the effect of the Dutch on an author's particular situation forced him to re-order his view of the world and therefore to write a certain sort of 'text' which will be different from other 'Javanese texts' both specifically in its treatment of the Dutch and *in toto* – secularly optimistic vs. transcendently pessimistic, outward and forward-looking vs. inward and backward-looking etc. – in so far as the authors have had differing experiences. From the still somewhat limited sample available, we can already note different responses to the Dutch. Other authors, in contrast to Purwasastra, minimize (or do not perceive) the ways in which the Dutch were (racially, culturally, technologically) a 'different' group, for instance by depicting the Governor-General as just another Javanese prince possessed of the attributes of power (wives, concubines, *gamelan*, regalia).

In addition to its interpretation of Balambangan's relationship with the Balinese and the Dutch, Purwasastra's *babad* gives some very interesting testimony on the relationship seen as existing between the VOC and the rulers of the two Central Javanese kingdoms. His representation of this particular relationship is ambiguous: at times he writes as if the VOC were the servant, or at least the lesser ally, of the Sunan, as for instance when the new Governor of the north-east coast, setting out for Semarang, is told by the Governor-General to conduct himself humbly towards the Sunan and the Sultan; or when the glories of the ruler of Solo are celebrated – his threefold descent from Majapahit, heavenly nymphs, and the Prophet, his authority over all the *bupati* of Java and the awe he inspires in rulers over the sea – and the author remarks that now his *kraton* is even more exalted since the *Kumpeni* support it (*saya luhur karatonira pan rinojong dening Kumpeni*).⁴⁹ Again, before launching the attack on Malang, the Governor at Semarang asks permission from the Sunan, adding *saking ajrih kawula dateng ing gusti* (as your servant fears to go against his lord – the words *kawula* and *gusti* indicating a servant-master relationship of great distance, as between a ruler, or God, and his subjects).⁵⁰

At other times, however, at least some of the characters in the *babad* represent the Javanese rulers as subordinate to the Dutch – for instance, when Malayukusuma's *patih* advises him against resisting the Dutch since even the two kings of Java have submitted (*suyud*) to them.⁵¹ Elsewhere, the Governor

⁴⁹ LOr 2185, Canto 33, Stanza 4.

⁵⁰ LOr 2185, Canto 33, Stanza 26.

⁵¹ LOr 2185, Canto 31, Stanza 30.

at Semarang is described as having the power to make and unmake *tumenggung* and *bupati*;⁵² and at another place Purwasastra represents the *Kumpeni* as seeing the conquest of Balambangan as a step towards making all on Java its servants.⁵³

It seems to me that this ambiguity is not unintentional, but rather reflects an awareness on the part of the author of a divergence between the form and substance of this relationship. This interpretation is supported by the evidence of the letters around which, as noted above, much of the action develops. Each letter is quoted in full, and the formal prologues announcing the sender of the letter and his relationship to the recipient differ consistently according to whether the letter is to be passed down within the VOC hierarchy or is to be sent from the *Kumpeni* to a Javanese ruler. In the former case, the VOC officials, particularly the Governor-General and Governor of the north-east coast, claim for themselves very large powers, whereas in the latter they adopt an attitude of subservience. One may compare, on the one hand, a letter from the Governor-General to the Governor of the north-east coast at Semarang, or a letter from the latter to one of his VOC subordinates, with, on the other, a letter addressed to the Sunan by the Governor of the north-east coast. In the first letter the Governor-General describes himself as: 'the Raja of the Company, the most honoured Governor-General, who has his seat in Batavia, who has authority over all Java, and rules the *tanah seberang*'.⁵⁴ The Governor of Java's north-east coast — who was in many ways a more powerful figure than the Governor-General himself, being responsible for relations with the Javanese courts and having the official title 'Gouverneur van Java'⁵⁵ — in the second letter styles himself 'Ruling *edelheer*'⁵⁶ of Semarang, commander in battle;⁵⁷ governor and director, who is all-powerful in Java'⁵⁸. When writing

⁵² LOr 2185, Canto 5, Stanza 69, *pan wenang amatenana, punggawa kang dodosan, awenang lungsur tumenggung, wenang akarya bupati* [indeed he has the authority to have put to death officials who have sinned, and he has the authority to dismiss *tumenggung*, and to create *bupati*].

⁵³ LOr 2185, Canto 13, Stanzas 59-60: *Umatu para punggawa, yen angsala idine nateng Betawi, prayoga nuli ginepuk, negari Balambangan, malah mandar ing benjang dadia batur, sadaya ing tanah Jawa, kawengkua mring kumpeni*. [All the Company's officials said, supposing we obtain the permission of the prince of Batavia (the Governor-General), it would be better to make an assault on the country of Balambangan, so that in the future all Java may be our servant, to be ruled by the Company.]

⁵⁴ *Rajeng kumpeni, kangjeng gurnadur jendral, ingkang palungguh, pan negari Batawiyah, kang misesa saguning tanah Jawi, amengku tanah sabrang* (LOr 2185, Canto 15, Stanza 36).

⁵⁵ See P.J. Veth, *Java: geografisch, ethnologisch, historisch* (Haarlem, De Erven F. Bohn, 1878) Vol. II, p. 521.

⁵⁶ *Edelheer* was the title of the members of the 'Raad van Indie', the governing body of the VOC on Java.

⁵⁷ *Senapati*: also used in the title of the rulers of Mataram and their descendants.

⁵⁸ *Prabu deler ing Semarang, senapati payuda, gupenur lan direktur, kang anyakra bawah [i.e. anyakrawati?] Jawa* (LOr 2185, Canto 23, Stanza 21).

to the Sunan (in the last-mentioned letter), however, he switches from the *ingsun* ('I') used by monarchs, to the *kawula* ('your servant') used to monarchs, and kneels before the

most revered Susunan, who is held on high by all the Company soldiers . . . who rules the people of Java, and has authority over lords in religion, the commander in battle, who is made glorious by God, who exercises supreme power, who enjoys all the good things of the earth, who rules all rulers, who is protected by the Supreme Soul . . . surrendering to his Lord his life-and-death . . .⁵⁹

Purwasastra therefore depicts a type of relationship between the Company and the courts which is only maintained by the Company officials' willingness to show a deference not really consistent with the far-reaching claims to sovereignty which they made among themselves and were in the process of implementing. It is significant that by the last decades of the eighteenth century some Javanese at least were conscious of this ambiguity.⁶⁰

General Form and Characteristics of Purwasastra's Babad

This *babad* provides a coverage of recent political developments on Java which is both detailed and on the whole accurate, contrasting markedly with, for instance, the Surapati *babad* from Balambangan, which also attempts a wide coverage but whose basis in historical reality is exiguous.⁶¹ In contrast to the numerous *babad* which take for their framework the fortunes of one particular regional dynasty, this one maintains a pan-Java perspective, presenting political developments as essentially a struggle between the VOC and its opponents. In perceiving an 'anti-VOC' party on Java, Purwasastra anticipates the historiographical schema of a number of Indonesian nationalist historians. Where he differs is in the value accorded to this party of which the Surapati family forms the core,⁶² for in contrast to the nationalist historians Purwasastra depicts the individuals concerned as generally less heroic than the great men of the VOC⁶³ though still inheriting from their great ancestor a power to make reverberations in the universe.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ *Kangjeng susunan, kang sinuhun sagunging wadya kumpeni . . . Kang amengku ing rat tanah Jawi, kang misesa ratu ing agama, senapati ngalagane, sinung mulya ing yyang Agung, baudenda anyakrawati, kang mukti awihawa, kang ngreh para ratu, kang rineksa i [ng] yyang Sukma . . . angaturaken gusti pejah gesang . . .* (LOr 2185, Canto 33, Stanzas 19-21).

⁶⁰ Purwasastra's testimony contrasts with that of Jogjakarta writers who according to Ricklefs deny the Governor-General any rights of sovereignty over the court (*Mangkubumi*, ch. XI). It is not surprising, in view of the experience and situation of the court writers, that they should be reluctant to entertain this possibility.

⁶¹ See above, p. 192, note 17.

⁶² See LOr 2185, Canto 24.

⁶³ See LOr 2185, for example, Cantos 26-27.

⁶⁴ The death of Kertanegara, for instance, is followed by an earthquake. See below p. 202.

In maintaining this pan-Javanese perspective, the author unfolds a particularly controlled narrative, keeping the various threads of the story well in hand and making it easy for the reader, or listener, to follow the sequence of events even when many different people and places are involved in the action. The work has unity and coherence, and a consistent moral position, which can perhaps be expressed succinctly in the words of one of its actors: 'As long as Balambangan prospers, what does it matter if the *Kumpeni* rules us, as long as they are honest and do not plunder us, and the great ones do not take our wives'.⁶⁵

The mythological or supernatural elements in many *babad* have for long presented a problem for Western scholars.⁶⁶ The extent to which these elements are present varies from text to text; in some they dominate the whole, and 'history' is made by the direct intervention of supernatural forces.⁶⁷ In Purwasastra's work, the supernatural makes an appearance on three occasions. Pangeran Patih's departure from Balambangan to Bali at the behest of his overlord is attended by these manifestations:

rain weeping, and a cold howling wind, indeed it was a great curse, sounding an alarm for the collapse of the country of Balambangan. Not long afterwards the eastern foot of Mt Raung thundered. The gods of the kafirs shouted, on account of Balambangan, their voices making fearful reverberations. The people of Balambangan were aroused, for now for the first time they saw and witnessed such a howling wind.⁶⁸

After the Pangeran is put to death, the author says:

⁶⁵ *Asal kerta Balambangan, nora ketang kapurentah mring kumpeni, sok jujura manahipun, lan aja ajarah, lawan aja wong gede gelem anjibus maring rabining kawula* . . . (LOR 2185, Canto 14, Stanza 16).

⁶⁶ See, for example, H.J. de Graaf, 'Later Javanese Sources and Historiography' in Soedjatmoko et al. (eds.), *An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1965) pp. 119-136.

⁶⁷ An example of this type of text is discussed in Ricklefs, pp. 194-209.

⁶⁸ . . . *udan tangis, samirana moncawara [= moncawora], apan ageng sengarane, tengerane [= tengarane] lamun rengka, negari Belambangan, tan antara gunung Raung, jemagui [= jumegur] suku kang wetan. Surak dewaning wong kapi, kang pinuju Belambangan, geter pater syarane, kaget ing wong Balambangan, dening tembe tumingal, lawan ta tembe andulu, undane kang moncawarna [= moncawora]*. (LOR 2185, Canto 8, Stanzas 37-38).

a voice was heard from above the sky, calling Pangeran Patih from a distance: "O King of Balambangan, entrust your cause to God the exalted, in the future He will revenge you by punishing the one who has done evil. God cannot be kept in ignorance, He will be strong in taking your part in the years that remain . . .".⁶⁹

And lastly, the death of Kertanegara of Lumajang is followed by an earthquake.⁷⁰

It is significant, however, that there is no direct intervention of the supernatural with an immediate *causal* effect on the events which follow – or to put it another way, there are omens but not miracles.⁷¹ In the first example cited, the shouts of the heathen gods may perhaps be interpreted as a dramatic device marking the end of the old order in Balambangan, functionally similar to the cry 'Great Pan is dead!'; and in the second, the voice from the sky testifies to the inevitable operation of a *general* law, that is, that when men act in defiance of divinely sanctioned morality, they must suffer the consequences. The operation of this general law may be deduced from a particular sequence of events, but it is not inextricably interwoven in their unfolding, for which the immediate causation, if not the 'deeper' explanation, can be seen in purely secular terms: the people of Balambangan were willing to accept VOC rule because they saw it as at least possibly better than that of the Balinese deputies, who were hated because of their exactions and offences against common morality, and it was for this reason that Balinese rule over Balambangan came to an end. The whole *babad* is so organized as to induce the reader to make this type of explanation on the basis of the evidence he is given; and even with the 'supernatural' passages entirely excised, would still form a perfectly complete and logical whole. If this were done with some other *babad* very little would be left, and that little would be reduced to a collection of logically unconnected episodes.⁷²

⁶⁹ . . . wonten suwara kang karungu, saluhure madyagantang, anyeluk pangeran Pati [h] . . . Lahi sang nata Balambangan den pracaya asraha dewa kang luwih, benjang males ukum, maring kang gawe ala, mapan dewa tan kena kinarya tambuh, apan agung belanira, ing benjang taun-taun kang kari. (LOR 2185, Canto 9, Stanzas 23-24).

⁷⁰ LOR 2185, Canto 27, Stanzas 6-7.

⁷¹ By 'miracles' I mean such occurrences as the routing of the Majapahit army by Sunan Giri's pen-turned-*kris* as described in J.J. Meinsma (ed.), *Babad Tanah Jawi* ('s-Gravenhage, 1874), p. 27f.

⁷² This exercise can be performed on, for example, the account of battle for supremacy on Java between the Javanese and the forces of *tanah sabrang* (men from overseas) as described in the *Surya Raja*. See Ricklefs, pp. 200-07.

This is therefore one of the *babad* which conform most closely with Western expectations of what a 'history' should be. It is secular, political, realistic; it weaves together many threads within the controlling framework of an apparently unidirectional view of time, it gives a lively commentary on the distinctive physical and mental characteristics of representatives of recognizably different cultures, rather than attempting to deny the 'particular' in order to accommodate all elements within the stereotypes of an over-riding historical myth.⁷³

Balambangan and Indonesian Historiography

In conclusion, let me consider two issues raised by the characteristics and subject-matter of the Purwasastra *babad*: firstly, what factors tend to produce one sort of 'history' rather than another, or none at all; and secondly, what might be the significance of the period interpreted by Purwasastra for a modern Indonesian historian.

What were the stimuli for history-writing at this period? The most obvious one was war: many *babad* deal specifically with one or more of the great wars of the period 1740-1830 (the 'Chinese War', the wars leading to the partition of Mataram, the East Java campaigns which form Purwasastra's subject, the English conquest, the Dipanagara wars) and even minor incidents had their historians,⁷⁴ down to the isolated and quickly crushed imminent rebellion on behalf of Pangeran Suryengalaga⁷⁵ in 1883. The nineteenth century Balinese histories, too, are histories of wars (those which ended the independence of the principalities) and even *babad* whose intention is to recount the history of the Javanese dynasties detail not social change or the development of political institutions, but dynastic warfare: even religious change is presented in military rather than theological terms. With the establishment of the *pax Neerlandica* on Java there were no wars, and therefore no subject for history.

Can we argue that the wars of this period, during which the Company (after more than a century on Java) assumed a much greater military role, were of such a different category in their scope, nature, and deadly significance for Javanese society as to have stimulated a new desire to write history?

⁷³ This is not to say that its explanations are therefore 'true': they comprise, as became evident from comparison with the 19th century *babad*, a partisan account of the events of the period and must be treated as such.

⁷⁴ Pakubuwana IV's brief defiance of the Company, for instance, is chronicled in the *Babad Pakepung* (see Ricklefs, ch. IX).

⁷⁵ A Jogjakarta writer loyal to the reigning Sultan wrote a detailed account of this affair (LOR 6756 in the Leiden University library collection).

The answer to this question depends of course on whether the lack of extant histories from earlier periods really indicates that there was then no historiography, or is a *trompe d'oeil*. We must take account not only of the factor of physical loss of manuscripts, but also of the tendency (in a partly literate society where the requirements for preserving a strictly 'historical' view of the past – notably the preservation of a wide range of written records which a large literate community habitually consulted – were lacking) for histories to become assimilated to non-historical literary models current in court or village circles. For example, it seems to me that one group of *babad* about the historical figure Surapati are in the process of becoming assimilated to the Yusup romance so popular among Javanese Muslims.⁷⁶ One may speculate, but cannot prove, that earlier 'histories' have been completely absorbed into the Panji and other cycles. So it is premature to conclude that there was no earlier historical tradition. Undoubtedly, however, the great changes of this period had their effect on the *type* of history written. Purwasastra's realistic, involved and politically partisan history can be seen to be related to a number of factors peculiar to his time and place: the impact of a sudden and immediately visible break between old and new structures (the kingdom of Balambangan overtaken by the Company) combined with a feeling of the possibility and even necessity of actively choosing one or the other of the alternatives which seemed to be offered for the future; and the conjectured effect of a number of competing view-points on political and economic desiderata – it will be remembered that Balambangan not only showed a major division between pro-Balinese and pro-VOC parties, but was also a centre for significant groups of Chinese and Englishmen.

It seems clear, in view of the very divergent uses of historical material among even the small sample of *babad* so far published or discussed, that we should beware of talking about a Javanese 'mind' or 'world-view' independent of the particular reality confronted by each Javanese author. Indeed, it may be that many of the difficulties we outsiders have had in understanding these mysterious texts stem from such assumptions, and from a mistaken hope that a single key can be found which will unlock all doors.

Turning to the second question – the significance of this period to modern Indonesian historians – it is immediately apparent that it is crucial to Javanese history, for through these campaigns VOC domination of the island was finally established. Nevertheless, the interpretation of the period is problematic. Where colonial accounts centred around the military progress of the VOC assuming the historical inevitability and desirability of its eventual triumph, such an organization is hardly likely to carry conviction for modern Indonesians. In the process of re-examination, is it then possible to discern another historical force which might be considered as the bearer of more just,

⁷⁶ See my *Surapati* (I have not, however, noted the similarity of the accounts of Surapati's youth to the romance).

humane and enlightened ideas for man and society, a force whose significance has been minimized by the previously dominant historical orthodoxy?⁷⁷ One may note that in the recent re-examination of the history of other parts of the modern state, a number of historians have assigned this role to Islam, personified by such figures as Iskandar Muda, Sultans Alauddin and Hasanuddin,⁷⁸ Dipanagara, and the heroes of the Padri and Aceh wars. In the present case, however, the historical facts make such an interpretation peculiarly difficult: Islam was, after all, here not the core of 'anti-colonial' resistance, as it was in Banten and Aceh, but was actually forced on Balambangan by the VOC, and associated further with Madurese colonization, under VOC auspices, of a devastated land. Furthermore, allegiance to Islam is not, in this part of Java particularly, the unifying factor that it may be elsewhere, since perhaps nowhere else has the creation of a plural society⁷⁹ in the colonial period so eroded the basis of social consensus. This is not to argue that present-day divisions are historically continuous with those evidenced by the *babad*, since in fact the break in historical continuity and historical tradition is as complete as one might ever expect to find. But present-day divisions are such as to find fuel in interpretations of the course of these earlier historical events. There exists already in modern Javanese writings an interpretation of the island's history strongly opposed to the Islamic viewpoint mentioned above: an interpretation in which Islam is assigned an important functional role, but one as *diabolus ex machina* in the scenario of decline and defeat, betraying and weakening Javanese society by seducing it from its more strongly rooted and ancient beliefs. This interpretation is typified by the 'well-known' (or notorious) *Serat Dermagandul* from the Kediri region, a work which

⁷⁷ In this connection, compare the 'rehabilitation' of the Tay Son movement as against orthodox dynastic legitimization in modern Vietnam (see Marr, in this volume).

⁷⁸ See for example La Sida' Daeng Tapala, 'L'Expansion du royaume de Goa et sa politique maritime aux xvi et xvii siècles', *Archipel*, 10, pp. 159-71.

⁷⁹ It is not yet possible to say with certainty to what extent ideological divisions coincide with or cut across the dimension of inter-ethnic division, although it is obvious that the *Nahdatul Ulama* was strong in Madurese regions and it has been suggested that divisions between Muslim parties may have had an ethnic aspect. See H. Feith, *The Indonesian Elections of 1955* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1957) p. 83; B.B. Hering and G.A. Willis, *The Indonesian General Elections of 1971* (Bruxelles, Centre d'étude du Sud-Est asiatique et de l'Extrême Orient, 1973) p. 18; K. Ward, *The 1971 Elections in Indonesia: an East Java Case Study* (Melbourne, Monash U.P., 1974) pp. 167-8. Since post-independence censuses no longer include information on *suku* affiliation, extensive field-work would be necessary to establish the relationship between these divisions. Studies currently being undertaken do seem to indicate that post-1965 conversions to the 'new Hinduism' radiating out of Bali are mainly from those areas settled by immigrants from Central Java, that is, Jember Selatan, the Pare district and the slopes of Mt. Kelud, south-west of Madiun (unpublished seminar paper on the 'new Hindus' of East Java, given by Ron Hatley at the Australian National University, 16 May 1974).

breathes rejection of Islam as being a religion foreign to Java and the Javanese; moreover, a religion which had come to power as a result of the utterly reprehensible conduct of the *walis*, the venerated saints of ancient Javanese Islam who conspired against Majapahit, and by the ignominious action taken by Raden Patah, the first king of Demak, against his father . . .⁸⁰

The re-publication of this work in 1925 caused a furor both among Muslims and in the Chinese community (which had equal grounds for taking offence). The even balance between the consciously Islamic and the at least non-Islamic electorate suggested by East Javanese voting patterns⁸¹ makes such differences of interpretation potentially explosive.

Furthermore, the fact that the demographic pattern of this region is not the result of a gradual autonomous evolution but is in a sense merely the debris of a particularly violent colonial experience makes it equally hard for a modern historian to interest his readers in the evolution of shared norms of the sort which do, for example, make recognizable Dutchmen out of members of bitterly opposed religious persuasions.

It may be objected that in attributing 'value', either positive or negative, to the Islamic or to any other perceived social force in interaction at a particular period, a partiality is introduced which is improper for the historian, who should strive for that 'serenely and absolutely neutral' viewpoint attributed to van Leur.⁸² This leads us into a debate too important to be encapsulated here. It is, however, perhaps worth reminding ourselves that the work of England's major historians, from Macaulay (and even before him) to Rowse and his contemporaries, has been inseparably bound up with two related endeavours: firstly, to perceive in the historical process a coherent and developing core of intellectual and social values which can provide both a sense of cultural continuity and a basis for the direction of future progress; and secondly, to argue the strength of one perception of these values against those of other historians. If moral neutrality is invoked to preclude debate of this order, the study of history is reduced to an activity unlikely to engage the vital attention of an educated public anywhere, and there would be little reason to suppose that it might achieve more than its present minor importance in Indonesian intellectual life.

⁸⁰ G.W.J. Drewes, 'The Struggle between Javanism and Islam as illustrated by the Serat Dermagandul', *BKI*, 122, iii (1966) p. 310.

⁸¹ See Feith, pp. 66, 83; Hering and Willis, table 16b etc.

⁸² J.R.W. Small, 'On the Possibility of an Autonomous History of Modern Southeast Asia', *JSEAS*, 2, ii (1961) p. 80.

CAMBODIAN PALACE CHRONICLES (*RAJABANGSAVATAR*), 1927-1949:

Kingship and Historiography at the End of the Colonial Era*

David Chandler

The chronicle histories (*bangsavatar*) of King Sisowath Monivong (r. 1927-1941) and of his grandson, King Norodom Sihanouk (r. 1941-1955; the chronicle stops at the end of 1949),¹ are the last examples of a venerable Cambodian genre derived from the tradition of royal chronicles (*phraratchaphongsawadan*) in Thailand.²

The manuscripts are of very different lengths. Monivong's takes 132 pages to cover fourteen years, while Sihanouk's uses over 800 pages to deal with nine. This difference reflects changes in what it was thought proper for a *bangsavatar* to include — Sihanouk's chronicle contains decrees and speeches, for example, while Monivong's does not³ — as well as a change of style from that of a sixty-five year old brigadier in the French Army *en retraite* (as Monivong was when he died) to an eighteen year old boy. More importantly, the expansion of the format reflects changes in the ideology of kingship, forced on the French by the pressures of World War II, and thus in the way that people in the palace, including Sihanouk, came to view this institution, and its role in Cambodia's past.⁴

* In revising this paper for publication, I have benefited greatly from discussions with Barbara and Leonard Andaya, David Marr, and Craig Reynolds, as well as from other papers given at the colloquium especially those of Shelly Errington and Michael Vickery.

¹ The chronicles, entitled *Rajabangsavatar brah Sisowath Monivong* (hereafter RSM) and *Rajabangsavatar brah Norodom Sihanouk* (hereafter RNS) were photographed by the Centre for East Asian Studies in Tokyo, from a copy in Phnom Penh, and are available on microfilm. Unfortunately, the chronicle of Monivong's father, Sisowath (r. 1904-1927), came to my attention only as this collection was going to press. It is also available from Tokyo on microfilm.

² For a discussion of this tradition, see D. Wyatt, 'Chronicle Traditions in Thai Historiography' in C.D. Cowan and O.W. Wolters (eds.), *Southeast Asian History and Historiography: Essays presented to D.G.E. Hall*, (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1975); Charnvit Kasetsiri, *The Rise of Ayudhya*, (Oxford, O.U.P., 1975); and the contributions of Charnvit Kasetsiri, Craig Reynolds and Michael Vickery in this volume. In my studies of Cambodian chronicles, I have benefited from discussions with Vickery and Wyatt.

³ On the parameters of the genre at this time, see my 'Duties of the Corps of Royal scribes: an undated Khmer Manuscript from the Colonial Era', *JSS*, 63, ii (1975) pp. 343-8. From RSM, p. 43, I can now tentatively date the manuscript from 1931.

⁴ The view of the past outside the palace was quite different, with less emphasis on kingship, and more on rebellious (or loyal) rural heroes. See, for example, Anonymous, *Roïeng robalkhsat srük khmaer* (Phnom Penh, 1958) drawn from a manuscript, in verse, dating from 1869-1870.

Monivong's chronicle is the only Cambodian account we have of his reign. Writing history has never been as honoured or as popular in Cambodia as in Thailand or Vietnam, but there is evidence that the number of *bangsavatar* in circulation fell sharply with the institutionalization of French control, after the death of King Norodom (r. 1860-1904). Before that time, as Professor Coedès has shown,⁵ copies and versions of *rajabangsavatar* were to be found not only in the palace, but also in monastic libraries throughout the kingdom. With Norodom's death and, ironically, the advent of printing in Khmer, manuscripts of *rajabangsavatar* no longer circulated outside the environs of the palace, no *bangsavatar* with a provincial focus appear to have been written, and no complete edition of the chronicles was published in Khmer.⁶ These developments contrast sharply with the flowering of historiography in Thailand and Vietnam.⁷ To compound the irony, the years 1927-1949, which lacked local historians, accessible texts and indigenous students of history were ones in which French scholars were successfully reconstructing Cambodia's past, at Angkor and elsewhere, as a small part of what one of them has called the 'monologue' of colonialism.⁸ In the colonial period, then, foreigners took more interest in Cambodia's history than the Cambodians did themselves. This inertia stemmed from the private nature of the genre, a lack of interest in history as a literary form, the limited audience for secular books, the French orientation of Cambodian schools, and perhaps from the colonial situation itself.

With this in mind, it is not surprising that Monivong's chronicle is uneventful and pro-French. This is less a result of censorship after the fact than censorship beforehand, stemming from Monivong's own fondness for the French, from obvious constraints against his speaking out, and from the fact that palace affairs, including the compilation of *bangsavatar*, were throughout his reign in the hands of a powerful pro-French official named Tiounn.⁹ But would the format be very different had it been compiled, in 1941, in an independent kingdom? Probably not, for the traditions of the genre, like those surrounding the *hikayat* discussed by Dr Errington, favoured a flat recital of events, the

⁵ G. Coedès, 'Essai de classification des documents historiques cambodgiens conservés à la bibliothèque de l'EFEO', *BEFEO*, 18, ix (1918) pp. 15-28.

⁶ Eng Sut (comp.) *Akkasar mahaboros khmaer* (Phnom Penh, 1969) was followed by Dik Keam (ed.), *Bangsavatar khmaer: sastra sluk rut vat Setbur* (Phnom Penh, 1975). Eng Sut's chronicle ends with Norodom's death, and Dik Keam's in 1860. They represent, respectively, the traditions known as 'Nong' and 'Tiounn', discussed in Michael Vickery's contribution to the present volume. In the colonial era, a severely truncated version was F. Poulichet (ed.), *Histoire du Cambodge* (Phnom Penh, 1935).

⁷ See D. Wyatt; Charnvit Kasetsiri's contribution to the present volume; and K. Breazeale, 'A Transition in Thai Historical Writing', *JSS*, 59, ii (1971) pp. 25-50. On Vietnamese developments, see David Marr's paper below.

⁸ Paul Mus, *Le destin de l'Union Française* (Paris, Seuil, 1954) p. 53.

⁹ On Tiounn, see RSM, p. 64; M. Osborne, *The French Presence in Cochinchina and Cambodia: Rule and Response (1859-1905)* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1969, p. 241).

suppression of 'voices', and the accurate recording of the ceremonial actions of the king. Monivong's *bangsavatar* is repetitive and dry, but this reflects the character of the genre rather than colonial restraints upon it. Pre-colonial *bangsavatar* are also repetitive and flat, partly because they record the performance each year of rituals sponsored by the king which were thought to assure the well-being of the kingdom and to enhance the king's own fund of merit. The monarch's merit in the eyes of his subjects was linked to his ceremonial life, and this, in turn, was geared to calendars maintained within the palace.¹⁰ In ceremonial terms, the king brought the year to life, and the *bangsavatar* records his doing so. The details of timing are important; there is little that can be heightened or foreshortened in a posthumous account, and certainly no dates can be omitted. 'Dullness', in a sense, is what the chroniclers were trying to convey; they saw the past as something that repeats itself; the alternative was chaos. The question then arises: convey to whom? And the answers would seem to be: to nobody, to posterity, to themselves. Historians outside the palace were not meant to read the chronicles, and neither was the general public. The *bangsavatar*, unlike the *hikayat*, were not written for recital, or to entertain. In the case of Monivong's chronicle, the primary purpose of the original text was probably to form part of his regalia after he was dead; the break in Sihanouk's chronicle while he was still alive and the recopying of both texts in 1949 is impossible to explain.¹¹

Monivong's chronicle is austere. The king's words are never quoted directly, and we learn nothing of his reaction to events until the last pages of the chronicle, which record his grief at the French defeat in the Franco-Thai War.¹² The substance of discussions with his ministers, or with the French, is not reported, and there are only three quotations from royal decrees, all relating to reforms in the Buddhist monastic order. His non-official life, beyond his sponsorship of ceremonies and his movements from place to place, is not discussed, and for someone looking for revelations about his reign, the chronicle is almost useless. Its interest lies in its traditionalist flavour — especially when placed alongside Sihanouk's *bangsavatar*, discussed below — and in the way its

¹⁰ In form, the *bangsavatar* seems to resemble the classical Chinese 'Diaries Activity and Repose' (*ch'i chu chu*) compiled during an emperor's reign and later absorbed into the dynastic annals. See Lien-Sheng Yang, 'The Organization of Official Chinese Historiography', in W.G. Beasley and E.G. Pulleyblank (eds.), *Historians of China and Japan* (London, O.U.P., 1961) p. 45. David Marr has also suggested (personal communication) that the genre in some ways resembles the remembrance books maintained by some Western parents for each of their young children.

¹¹ The office of royal scribes, however, continued in existence at least until 1971 and chronicles were compiled there until 1966 (Kin Sok, personal communication). This is in sharp contrast to its counterpart in Thailand, which appears to have been phased out after the death of King Rama V (Chulalongkorn) in 1910 (M.R. Prudhisana Jumbala, personal communication).

¹² RSM, pp. 131-2.

view of the world is tailored to meet the exigencies of the genre. These are not, as Dr Errington has shown, the exigencies of narrative *per se*. The chroniclers' perceptions of the past are contained in a dynastic model; although the *bangsavatar* by definition looks at Monivong's reign as a whole, it does so by recopying the raw data of his reign, in the order that events occurred, and never strays, for insights, outside the limits of the reign.

A large part of the chronicle, then, describes ceremonies performed or sponsored by the king. These included those connected with agriculture and reverence for ancestors, that punctuated the Cambodian year,¹³ ceremonies associated specifically with Buddhism, and others connected with Monivong's travels, or with the reception of official visitors to his court. In each case, the *bangsavatar* gives the date, using at least two calendrical styles of notation, the time of day, the costumes prescribed for officials, the gifts exchanged with visitors, and, in the case of a coronation or a funeral, the order of march. The specific prayers or speeches recited at a ceremony are omitted and so are personal descriptions.

We hear Monivong's voice, in indirect quotation, only twice. The first time is in July 1933, when he travelled by car with French and Cambodian officials to several provinces giving talks to local farmers, urging them to work hard, save their money and pay their debts to the Chinese. The second occasion was in 1935, when he spoke at the consecration of a Buddhist *wat*, and urged the monks to avoid splitting into rival sects.

Inside the palace, the chronicle records such things as royal births and deaths, the promotion and retirement of concubines and high officials, changes in working hours, wages and official costumes, and the arrival of the king's French automobile (an *Arjudat* in transliteration) valued at 10,000 *riel*. It also reports the king's sponsorship of particular *wat*, his trips inside the kingdom and improvement to his two estates.

Outside this range, the world is dimly drawn. The chronicle mentions French public works, such as Monivong bridge, the railway to Battambang and the central market in Phnom Penh; the inauguration of Cambodia's first *lycée*, named after Monivong's father, in 1935; an agricultural fair in the same year; and the invention by a French mechanic, near the central market, of a bicycle-powered rickshaw, or *cyclopousse*. In the provinces, which are usually mentioned only in connection with royal visits, there are two reports of malfeasance by Cambodian officials, later pardoned by the king, and eclipses and poor harvests are also noted.¹⁴ At the national level, we learn of the appointment of each French *résident supérieur*, but no information about these men is supplied, and the only activities that are mentioned are their official encounters with the king.

¹³ See E. Poree-Maspero (ed.), *Ceremonies des douze mois* (Phnom Penh, [1952]); and my 'Duties', note 6.

¹⁴ RSM 67 and 87. These entries suggest a royal connection with the energies of the soil; none existed, apparently between the king and the kingdom's commercial well-being.

The chronicle is silent, too, about events in other parts of Indo-China, or indeed anywhere in Asia except Thailand, which is the subject of several entries, including a full-page report using royal language where appropriate on the anti-monarchic coup in Bangkok in 1932. As for events in the rest of the world, the *bangsavatar* mentions the assassination of the French president, Paul Doumer, referring to him as 'Mr Republic, the King of France'; the accidental death of King Albert of Belgium; and the early stages of World War II, where Pétain's terms of surrender occupy two pages. The Ethiopian War is mentioned, but not the war in Spain.

The chronicle closes with a terse account of the Franco-Thai War that blames the French defeat on a shortage of military aircraft. According to Sihanouk, the war broke his grandfather's will to live,¹⁵ and while the chronicle records that he 'said nothing' about it, a French official asserted that in the last few months of Monivong's reign he refused to speak French.¹⁶ He died in April 1941, and the French chose his daughter's son, over several other candidates, to take his place.¹⁷

Like the dog in the Sherlock Holmes story that 'did nothing in the night-time', the omissions in Monivong's chronicle are as significant as what is included. The absence of the king's voice has already been mentioned; so has the absence of an audience. Controversy is also left out, although we know from other sources that the French community in Cambodia was faction-ridden,¹⁸ as were segments of the Buddhist clergy;¹⁹ the Cao Dai religion caused serious problems, too.²⁰ The chronicle says nothing about social friction in the kingdom, or about demography, and its treatment of economic issues is limited to recording changes in salary for Khmer officials and the circulation of new coins or paper money. Although the administrative aspects of Buddhism are often stressed, Cambodia's cultural life, in which Monivong took a great interest, is not mentioned. The most useful conclusion we can draw from this is that it was viewed upon completion as a religious object, useful in ceremonies honouring Monivong's reign and the dynasty as a whole. This would explain the fastidiousness about dating events and why the recurrent, role-enhancing and

¹⁵ Norodom Sihanouk, 'L'oeuvre de sa Majesté Monivong', *Realités cambodgiennes* (16 August 1958) p. 7.

¹⁶ Decoux, p. 284.

¹⁷ See M. Osborne, 'Kingmaking in Cambodia, Sisowath to Sihanouk', *JSEAS*, 3, iii (1973) pp. 169-85, which discusses rivalries between the Sisowath and Norodom branches of the royal family.

¹⁸ Cf. the vitriolic campaign carried out against *resident supérieur* Silvestre, in the French-language *Le Khmer* in the second half of 1936.

¹⁹ Cf. G. Coedes' review of Buddhist Institute's Cambodian dictionary, which discusses the infighting that delayed its publication, in *BEFEO*, 38, (1938) pp. 314-31.

²⁰ On the Cao Dai, see Khy Phanra, 'Les origines du Caodaisme au Cambodge (1926-1940)' *Mondes Asiatiques* (Autumn 1975) pp. 315-48.

merit-making aspects of the king's life — such as his patronage of Buddhism, for example, or his gifts to French officials — are stressed at the expense of what was mundane, 'political' and idiosyncratic (such as his annual grant of opium, for example, from the French authorities).²¹ In this way, Monivong's *bangsavatar* fits into a widespread Southeast Asian tradition and into perceptions of the past that this tradition implies.

Monivong's chronicle is incomplete and biased, but not necessarily false. The unruffled surface of the text (and its lack of depth) matches French accounts of 'peaceable' Cambodia at this time, and reinforces a colonial official's statement in 1936 that Monivong had kept the political 'health' of his kingdom 'intact'.²² Put another way, as it was by a nationalist writing in 1945, this meant that Cambodians were 'unconscious' or 'asleep' for most of the colonial era — for the portion of it, in fact, when writing history was out of fashion.²³ There were economic and social changes in Monivong's reign that helped to pave the way for Cambodian nationalists in the 1940s, and persistent inequalities that led some Cambodians to Marxism, but the *histoire événementiel* of Monivong's era has not, so far, tempted Cambodian writers.

Sihanouk's chronicle, on the other hand, like Sihanouk himself, is a rich if erratic primary source that maintains a royal focus while widening its parameters to include the text of speeches (by the King and others), newspaper clippings, legends and decrees. For our purposes, which are largely comparative, the chronicle can be broken into three parts: 1941-1945 (pp. 133-492); March-September 1945 (pp. 493-552) and 1945-1949 (pp. 553-929) which saw the return of the French, negotiations for independence and, inside Cambodia, the growth of political parties. In this last period, which has been studied by V.M. Reddi and Phillipe Preschez, among others,²⁴ the day-to-day format of the *bangsavatar* collapses, and long sections of the text read as if they have been transferred *verbatim* from the press. For these reasons, I will concentrate on the period 1941-1945, which saw at least two reassessments — one by the French and the second by the Khmer — of kingship and historiography.

²¹ The grant was abolished at the beginning of Sihanouk's reign (see below, note 24). Under Sisowath the opium was presented annually as a new year's gift to the king by the *resident supérieur*. See H. Franck, *East of Siam* (New York, Appleton-Century 1926) p. 24.

²² *Le Khmer*, 4 January 1936. The full sentence is: 'Aussi bien la situation de votre royaume reste-t-elle tout à fait satisfaisante: sante politique intacte, libre acceptation des disciplines nécessaires, courageuse resistance a une crise economique grave . . . '.

²³ RNS, p. 494. See H. de Graulade, *Le Réveil du Peuple Khmer* (Hanoi, 1935).

²⁴ P. Preschez, *Essai sur la démocratie au Cambodge* (Paris, Centre d'études des relations internationales, 1961); and V.M. Reddi, *A History of the Cambodian Independence Movement* (Tirupati, 1970).

With Monivong's death, the French moved swiftly to reassert their hegemony in Cambodia. They did so to meet unprecedented threats stemming from events in Europe, their defeat by the Thai, Japanese occupation, and increasing anti-French feeling among Cambodia's elite. The method they chose was to conclude a protocol with Sihanouk, raising his allowance, broadening his powers, and encouraging him to introduce reforms.²⁵ Over the next four years, the French 'unleashed' the young king — under close supervision — allowing him far greater visibility among his people than previous monarchs had enjoyed, and encouraging him to give speeches and to take an active role in the mobilization of Cambodian youth. These developments (and the retirement of Tiounn in August 1941) changed the format and style of the *bangsavatar* and also the relationship between the king and various segments of Khmer society.

In manipulating Sihanouk, the French helped to discredit him with the two groups who were opposed to their control — the Buddhist clergy and the bureaucratic elite — who made up the readership of the faintly nationalistic newspaper *Nagara Vatta* ('Angkor Wat', 1936-1942).²⁶ After isolating Sihanouk from these groups, the French encouraged him to reach out, behind the elite, to the 'non-politicized' segments of the society, especially peasants and students. The rift between the king and the *Nagara Vatta* group widened after 1942 when the paper was suppressed, narrowed briefly in 1945 when Cambodia was independent, and widened again through the 1950s and 1960s; in fact, several members of the group, like Son Ngoc Thanh and Poc Chhuen, were active in deposing Sihanouk from power. In the early 1940s, Sihanouk's increasing visibility changed him, in the eyes of his people (hardly any of whom had ever seen a king before), into a political figure as well as a ceremonial one.

The change in style from one reign to the next is noticeable from the early pages of the *bangsavatar*, where Sihanouk is quoted as noticing that there were 'too many people in the palace, and many of them were over-age'.²⁷ His cosmetic reforms to palace procedure in 1942-1943 received ample coverage, and so did his frequent trips to the provinces and elsewhere in French Indo-China. On many of these trips he was called upon to speak and his words were recorded both in the *bangsavatar* and in the press. The royal focus of the chronicle tends to block out foreign news, but the greater detail shows Sihanouk to have been both more manipulated and more politicized than his grandfather.

²⁵ Decoux, pp. 287-8, fails to mention this agreement, a copy of which was in the Royal Palace in Phnom Penh in June 1971, and also in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. The convention raised salaries of palace officials and of Sihanouk's immediate family, abolished the royal opium allowance, and promised to build Sihanouk a villa at Bokor. The treaty is not mentioned in the *bangsavatar* discussion of Decoux's visit (RNS, pp. 138-9) which states, however, that Decoux gave Sihanouk an automobile at this time worth 22,000 *riel*.

²⁶ For a discussion of this periodical, which deserves systematic attention, see Bunchhan Mul, *Kuk Niyobay* (Phnom Penh, 1971) pp. 10-26.

²⁷ RNS, p. 150. These introductory passages suggest that some of Sihanouk's entourage saw his coming to power as a 'restoration' of the type discussed by Craig Reynolds above.

The chronicle records, for example, his honouring a jar of soil brought from the two ceded provinces in 1941; ordering civil servants to desist from smoking opium; and eliminating Vietnamese and Thai toponyms from the Cambodian countryside, and substituting ones in Khmer. The chronicle also records Sihanouk's attendance at lectures on Cambodian history, given by French historians; the foundation of the *Commission des Moeurs et Coutumes Cambodgiens* (CMCC), a body set up to record and conserve Cambodia's folk heritage; and an extraordinary trip, by elephant, that took Sihanouk and some French and Khmer companions from Pursat to the Gulf of Siam. In 1943 a Cambodian literary contest was held, with the first prize named after the governor general, Admiral Decoux, and the others after Sihanouk and the Angkorean monarch, Jayavarman VII. The chronicle also discusses the legendary origin of several royal ceremonies, when noting that they took place.

Even with this widened focus, the chronicle is still royal and chronological, recording little about social change, war, or the economy. The expansion of Sihanouk's activities was part of an extension of French control – for Sihanouk always travelled with French officials, and always spoke in support of French policies – rather than a change of direction in the way Cambodia, France or the past was looked at from the palace. The policy of mobilizing the non-politicized segments of the society (into youth groups, for example) may have worked against the French in the long run. In the early 1940s, however, with one important exception, the French policy of using Sihanouk to maintain and embody the status quo was a success.

The exception was the monk's demonstration of 20 July 1942.²⁸ On this occasion about a thousand people, perhaps half of them members of the *sangha*, demonstrated against the arrest of two Buddhist monks who were accused of preaching anti-French sermons to the Cambodian militia. The demonstrators assembled at the headquarters of the *résident supérieur* after a peaceful march through the city led by the editor of the recently suppressed *Nagara Vatta*, Pach Chhoeun. Despite its size, the French had little trouble in dispersing the demonstration and over the next few weeks they arrested the civilians who had been involved. The two monks, one of whom died in prison, were treated as martyrs by Cambodian nationalists in 1945 and again in 1971, when the anniversary of the demonstration was celebrated. The demonstration, in fact, was the only one of its size between the so-called peasant demonstrations of 1916 and Cambodian independence.²⁹ Its importance for our purposes is that it is not mentioned in the 1942 portion of the chronicle, but in retrospect from the summer of 1945. In the 'Sihanouk years' (1946-1969) the demonstration was pointedly ignored.³⁰

²⁸ On the demonstration, see Fillieux, p. 166; Bunchhan Mul, pp. 44-50, and Reddi, pp. 85-6.

²⁹ See M. Osborne, 'Pleasant Politics in Cambodia: the 1916 Affair', *Modern Asian Studies*, 12, ii (1978) pp. 217-43.

³⁰ RNS, p. 493. For Sihanouk's disingenuous recollections, see his *L'Indochine vue de Peking* (Paris, Seuil, [1972]) p. 42, where he refers to the demonstration as 'tragi-comic'.

Until early 1945, when Phnom Penh was bombed twice, there are very few references to World War II in the chronicle. Most of its pages are taken up with accounts of Sihanouk's travels and especially with his role as the patron of Cambodian sport. Tours by the *résident* and by some of Sihanouk's close advisers are also noted. The Romanization crisis of 1943-1944, in which the *résident supérieur*, Gautier, sought to change the Cambodian writing system, is mentioned in passing, but Sihanouk's unhappiness with the proposal (a view he shared with the *sangha*) is not.³¹

During this period the chronicle, like the Cambodian-language press, often stressed Cambodia's past greatness, and continuities between Angkor and the present. But history was not seen in terms of struggle, or of stages, and the colonial era, still in full swing, was not seen as a phase of Cambodian history worth examining by itself.

This aspect of Cambodian historiography, like much else in the kingdom, changed dramatically in March 1945, when the Japanese interned or imprisoned the French throughout Indo-China, and informed the chiefs of state of the region that they were independent.³² The next few months were feverish ones from the standpoint of Cambodian nationalism, just as they were in other parts of Southeast Asia. The *bangsavatar* for this period is a valuable primary source, especially since others, like the French-language *Cambodge*, are no longer accessible.³³

For our purposes, the most interesting entries are those that describe the ceremony celebrating the monks' demonstration, described above, and an anonymous essay entitled 'New Policies of the Cambodian State' that appears among the entries for July 1945.³⁴ In these entries and in the newspaper *Cambodge* (where the anonymous essay may have appeared originally in French) the colonial era, now thought to be over, was discussed for the first time as an era, and Cambodian historiography was revised to stress anti-French activities among the people rather than continuities in kingship and folk culture. If the Cambodians had been 'unconscious' under the French, the essayist complains, this was because the French stressed their own values, culture and language, rather than Cambodian ones, in the government and in the schools: someone who was fluent only in Khmer, he said, was 'not the equal of a French dog'.

³¹ RNS, p. 293; Sihanouk, *L'Indochine vue de Peking*, pp. 38-9. The pro-French newspaper *Kambuja* carried some romanized columns in 1943-1944, but these never occupied a major part of the paper. Gautier's reforms were abrogated in the summer of 1945, and romanization was never reimposed.

³² Reddi, pp. 87-8; Decoux, pp. 325-7.

³³ Reddi, pp. 91-101, has some excellent quotations from *Cambodge*, which he consulted during his research in Cambodia in the 1950s.

³⁴ RNS, pp. 494-5; 546-7.

But what were 'Cambodian' values, and what was 'Cambodian' history? The writers of 1945 had little training in approaching questions of this kind, since so much of their literature and schooling – either by the French or under the auspices of the *sangha* – stressed obedience, hierarchization, conservatism and continuity. In attacking the colonial regime, however, the writers of 1945 turned to another tradition, that of popular rebellion against the French and earlier against the Vietnamese and the Thai, which, if not forgotten, was not officially allowed to be remembered.³⁵ In the 1945 entries, for the first time in the *bangsavatar*, these confrontations are openly discussed, and the activities of young intellectuals in the 1940s are placed in the context of the anti-monarchic rebellions of 1860 and 1866, the anti-French revolt of 1884-1885, the demonstrations of 1916, the so-called Bardez Incident of 1926 (placed, in this account, for symmetry, in Monivong's reign) and the monks' demonstration of 1942.³⁶ Seen in this way, Cambodian history was history with the kings left out, a sequence of assaults by recognizable heroes on those in power. Unsurprisingly, this version of the past was set aside after the French returned to Cambodia in October 1945, and it was not revived officially until the early 1970s, when, predictably perhaps, the historiography of the summer of 1945 was repeated rather than enlarged.³⁷

The inclusion of such material in a royal chronicle shows how far the genre had come since Monivong's death in 1941. Over the next few years, the chronicle became once again primarily a record of the king's activities, culminating in France's *de jure* recognition of Cambodian independence.³⁸ These years also saw the French gradually loosen their control over Sihanouk and his generally pro-French entourage, until he was able to say (and perhaps believe) that independence was something he had won rather than something he had been given. The *bangsavatar* records Sihanouk's trips, celebrations and speeches along

³⁵ For discussions of this undercurrent in Cambodian life, see C. Meyer, *Derrière le sourire khmer* (Paris, Plon, 1971) 32-43; A.S. Rolland, 'Les pirates au Cambodge' *BSEI*, 25 (1950) 427-37; and my 'An anti-Vietnamese rebellion in early nineteenth century Cambodia: pre-colonial imperialism and a pre-nationalist response', *JSEAS*, 6, i (1975) pp. 16-24.

³⁶ See Osborne, *The French Presence*, pp. 206-30; and *idem*, 'Peasant Politics'. The Bardez Incident involved the murder of a French official of that name by villagers from whom he was collecting taxes. See W. Langlais, *Andre Malraux: the Indochinese Adventure* (New York, 1966) pp. 190-6; also Dik Keam, *Bhumi Dijan* (Phnom Penh, 1971).

³⁷ By 1970, of course, the forbidden historiography was that with a Marxist viewpoint: this gives the anti-colonial literature published during the Lon Nol regime, which inherits the historiography of 1945, a curiously dated quality. The tradition flourished, however, in the Communist-oriented Issarak movement in the early 1950s. See, for example, United States Foreign Broadcasting Service (FBIS) *Daily Report*, 2 March 1951, which lists 'heroes' of the resistance, and FBIS *Daily Report* 28 November 1951, which carries a translation of a speech by the Issarak leader, 'Son Ngoc Minh' (pseud. Sieu Heng Yong?) stressing the continuities between anti-royal and anti-French rebellions.

³⁸ RNS, pp. 928 ff. This independence was lightly won; see Anonymous, *Le Cambodge Moderne* (Phnom Penh, 1950) p. 46, which notes that Cambodia's 'national sentiment is unaccompanied by any xenophobia'.

with the ups and downs of Cambodia's faltering parliamentary government. The focus, as always, is on the person of the king, although the rules about what can be included in the text are loosened a good deal. The chronicle closes as we have seen with Sihanouk still alive.

We know too little about the sociology of rural Cambodia in the colonial era, or even about the elite, to be able to say how the transformation of royal politics, recorded in these two *bangsavatar*, affected people's lives or changed their own ideas. But I suspect that an unrelieved royal focus is not especially helpful if we want to write a history of Cambodia from 1927 to 1949, or if we are to generalize about Cambodian perceptions of the past. Sihanouk's own periodization of Cambodian history in the years 1941-1970 as 'pre-Sihanouk', 'Sihanouk', and 'post-Sihanouk'³⁹ can be discounted. What characterized these years, and to an extent probably earlier ones as well, was not just the activities of the king but also a far-reaching and perhaps statistically inaccessible set of social, economic and ideological changes (not necessarily consonant with 'modernization') which broke to the surface in *Nagara Vatta*, anti-French and anti-Sihanouk rebellions, in the coup of 1970, and the savage destruction wreaked by both sides (and above all by the United States) in Cambodia's civil war. Some of the roots of the Cambodian revolution are to be found in this period. Sooner or later the incumbent regime will develop its own historiography, using sources like the *bangsavatar* and others, to write 'Cambodian' history — that is, history with the kings left out — which the writers of 1945 were hinting at: they will do this because, in Bernard Lewis' words, 'a new future [requires] a different past'.⁴⁰

³⁹ Sihanouk, *L'Indochine vue de Pékín*, p. 37.

⁴⁰ B. Lewis, *History: Remembered, Recovered, Invented* (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 1975) p. 11. In this connection an anonymous intellectual associated with the new regime has urged Cambodian historians to make a *table rase* of colonial historiography [Michael Vickery, personal communication].

INDIVIDUALS BETWEEN PAST AND FUTURE

The early twentieth century was a time of intense intellectual upheaval, as Asians sought to reconcile their inherited values with seemingly hostile Western doctrines of progress and Social Darwinism. This conflict had first to be resolved by individuals if their countrymen were to find new hope and light in some form of nationalism.

Three Indonesian writer-politicians are discussed in the following two essays. Soetomo was able to act politically when he had become in his own eyes fully Javanese — despite his Western education. Hamka gradually developed his father's reformist Islam into a secure basis for his own participation in nationalist thought and action. Yamin, a more restless soul, appeared to reach out for a new identity in tension with his Sumatran, Dutch-educated background.

**A TIME OF DARKNESS AND A TIME OF LIGHT:
Transposition in Early Indonesian Nationalist Thought***

Benedict O'Gorman Anderson

Just before his death in 1873, in the old royal capital of Surakarta, R.Ng. Ronggowarsita, the last of the great Javanese *pujangga* (court poets), wrote a despairing poem which he called *Serat Kala Tida* (Poem of a Time of Darkness).¹ Something of the tone of this poem may be gleaned from the following lines:

The lustre of the realm
Is now vanished to the eye
In ruins the teaching of good ways
For there is no example left
The heart of the learned poet
So coiled about with care
Seeing all the wretchedness
That everything is darkened
The world immersed in misery

The King kingly perfection
The Chief Minister chiefly in truth
The *bupati* constant of heart
The lower officials excellent
Yet none can serve to stay
The time of doom . . .

In this time of madness
To join the mad is unbearable
Anguish to the suffering heart
Yet not to join
Means losing all
Starvation at the end . . .²

* I would like to take this opportunity to thank the following colleagues who have in different ways helped me in the writing of this essay: Anthony Day, Ruth McVey, Craig Reynolds, Soemadi Atmowidjojo, Soeseno Kartomihardjo, James Scott, James Siegel, Tsuchiya Kenji and Oliver Wolters.

¹ R.Ng. Ronggowarsita, *Serat Kala Tida* ([Surakarta], Persatuan, [1933]).

² I have translated freely, and rather coarsely, from stanzas 2, 3 and 8. The Javanese text runs as follows: *Mangkya darajating praja / Kawuryan wus sunya ruri / Rurah pangrehing ngukara / Karana tanpa palupi / Ponang para mengkawi / Kawileting tyas maladkung / Kungas kasudranira / Tidem tandaning dumadi / Ardayeng rat dening karoban rubeda // Ratune ratu utama / Patihe patih linuwih / Pra nayaka tyas raharja / Panekare becik-becik / Parandene tan dadi / Paliyasing kalabendu . . . // Amenengi jaman edan / Ewuh ayahing pambudi / Melu edan nora tahan / Yen tan melu anglakoni / Boya kaduman melik / Kaliren wekasanipun . . . //* Here *bupati* refers to high-ranking court officials not of royal blood. My attention was first drawn to this poem by Anthony Day, currently completing a study of Ronggowarsita's work and of 19th century Javanese thought in general.

Taken one by one, most of these lines are unremarkable variations on classical *topoi* in Javanese culture. Both Javanese folklore and court literature contain highly conventionalized descriptions of *jaman kalabendu* – times of flood, earthquake and volcanic eruption in the natural order, and famine, violence and immorality in the social. Both traditions also present time-honoured images of golden ages – periods of cosmic order and social well-being, in which each person plays out his appointed role, hierarchies are maintained and harmony prevails. The explanation for the primordial oscillations between such epochs lay, according to traditional Javanese thought,³ in the success or failure of the ruler to concentrate around and in himself the immanent 'power' of the universe, through ascesis, selfless devotion to duty, and the capacity to attract or absorb other 'power'-ful persons or objects. The more perfect the ruler, the more brilliant and happy the society.

If the lines I have cited are in themselves so unremarkable, what accounts for the strange and painful sensations they arouse? Simply their extraordinary *juxtaposition*. For stanzas 2 and 8 belong to the *topos* 'time of darkness', while the first four lines of stanza 3 are a central part of the classical imagery of a 'time of light'. According to traditional Javanese logic, if 'the king [were] kingly perfection, the Chief Minister chiefly in truth . . .' then cosmos and society should *necessarily* be in order. But the next two lines show precisely the opposite. The single terrible word *parandene* (yet) expresses Ronggawarsita's desperate, and quite untraditional, sense that the old conception of the world was no longer valid, the cosmic rhythm had come unsprung, and Javanese 'power' was impotence. In their history the Javanese had gone through many 'times of darkness', but always with the sure expectation that eventually a ruler would come to reconcentrate the 'power' and inaugurate a new 'time of light'. In 1873, however, the dying poet spoke his fear that now was a 'time of darkness' that might never end.⁴

Thirty-five years later, on 20 May 1908, a small group of teenage Javanese students in the colonial capital of Batavia formed an organization which they called Budi Utomo. May 20 is now celebrated annually in Indonesia as the Day

³ For a more extensive treatment of traditional Javanese conceptions and images of power, see my 'The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture', in C. Holt, *et al.* (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1972), pp. 1-69, esp. 8-22.

⁴ Ronggawarsita's words may be the sharpest and most explicit expression of the general crisis of the 19th century Javanese spirit, as Dutch colonial rule steadily consolidated itself. But many other texts convey the same feeling in more oblique form. It is instructive to compare style and subject matter in a major pre-19th century text, such as the *Babad Tanah Jawi* and the strange but typically 19th century poem *Suluk Gatoloco*. The *Babad Tanah Jawi* recounts the bloody events of pre-colonial Javanese history in plain and matter-of-fact language. In the *Suluk Gatoloco*, which deals mainly with an imaginary theological debate between some 'Arabized' Javanese Muslims and a champion of 'Javanese' Islam in the form of an ambulatory, philosophizing penis (*gato* = penis, *ngloco* = masturbate), no violence occurs. But the language employed is unforgettable in its ornate ferocity.

of National Awakening. Akira Nagazumi's fine study on the early years of this organization is fittingly entitled *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism*.⁵ For dawn marks the passage from darkness to light, from sleep to wakefulness. And if both Nagazumi and contemporary Indonesians speak of 20 May 1908 in these figurative terms, they are not being willfully anachronistic. How many of the newspapers and periodicals from the early years of this century contain, in their very names, images of radiant light!⁶ Kartini's famous collected letters, *Door Duisternis tot Licht* (Through Darkness to Light), bear the same symbolic stamp.⁷

What are we to make of this metamorphosis of imagery? Some scholars have tended to read it as signifying the passage from 'tradition' to 'modernity', as though they 'who walked in darkness [had] seen a great light'. Robert Van Niel, for example, writes that:

in the atmosphere of the Westernized school . . . young Javanese found a life that differed from what they had known in their home environment. Not only was the difference one of physical environment, but what was far more important, one of mental environment: perhaps only slightly inaccurately generalized as the difference between a scientific-rational attitude and a mystical-animistic attitude.⁸

In this perspective, Budi Utomo represents simply the earliest Indonesian attempt to cope with the colonial condition in Western ('modern') ways. For, though Budi Utomo's very name was more Javanese than Indonesian; though its membership was restricted ethnically to what Clifford Geertz has called

⁵ Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism. The Early Years of Budi Utomo, 1908-1918* (Institute of Developing Economies, Occasional Papers Series, no. 10) (Tokyo, 1972).

⁶ About 25% of the Indonesian newspapers for the period 1900-1925 listed in G.R. Nunn, *Indonesian Newspapers. An International Union List* (Chinese Materials Research Aids Service Center, Occasional Series, no. 14) (Taipei, 1971), include in their titles one or more of the following words: *matahari* (sun), *surya* (sun), *bintang* (star), *nyala* (flame), *suluh* (torch), *pelita* (lamp), *sinar* (ray), *cahaya* (radiance), *api* (fire) and *fajar* (dawn). Others contain such words as *muda* (young), *baru* (new) and *gugah* (awakened).

⁷ The title was actually given by Kartini's editor, J.H. Abendanon, when he published her letters posthumously in 1911. But he was closely involved with, and sympathetic to the 'awakening' movement, and his choice of title fitted well with that milieu. See H. Geertz's introduction to R.A. Kartini, *Letters of a Javanese Princess* (New York, Norton, 1964), esp. pp. 15-16, 23.

⁸ R. Van Niel, *The Emergence of the Modern Indonesian Elite* (The Hague, van Hoeve, 1950), p. 173.

'Inner Indonesia', and socially to *priyayi* students and officials;⁹ and though its formal aims did not encompass political independence;¹⁰ yet its *structural* novelty seemed to mark a clear break with the past. As Van Niel puts it, 'Budi Utomo appears on the Indonesian scene as an *organization* based upon a *free* and *conscious* united effort by *individuals*'.¹¹ With its programs, branches, subscriptions, reports and congresses, Budi Utomo seemed to have no indigenous ancestry, but rather to be the wind-borne seed from which the Indonesian nationalist movement grew.¹²

If Indonesian writers have usually been unwilling to accept Van Niel's psychological and pedagogical dichotomies, they nonetheless have developed dichotomies of their own, conceived rather in moral, political and generational terms, as is evidenced by the pervasive pairing of *maju/kolot* (progressive/backward), *muda/tua* (young/old) and *sadar/masih bodoh* (aware/still ignorant).¹³ In both perspectives Budi Utomo has come to seem the locus of a fundamental transformation of consciousness. Yet much about this 'transformation' remains obscure. What follows below is a preliminary attempt to illumine that obscurity.

*

Budi Utomo was founded by students at the STOVIA¹⁴ medical school in Batavia, led by a nineteen year old East Javanese boy called Soetomo, who eventually became one of the most prominent nationalist leaders of his generation. Van Niel may be exaggerating a little when he writes that 'it is doubtful if any one man was of greater importance in shaping Indonesian life in the 1920s'.¹⁵ But as founder of the Surabaya-based Indonesian Study Club in 1924, of Partai Bangsa Indonesia in 1930, and of Parindra in 1935, Soetomo was certainly

⁹ 'Inner Indonesia' refers to the islands of Java, Bali and Madura and their 'Hinduized' populations. *Priyayi* refers to the traditional Javanese upper class of officials and literati. In fact, the founding members of Budi Utomo were exclusively ethnic Javanese. See Nagazumi, p. 39.

¹⁰ For details on these aims, see *ibid.*, pp. 157-160 (Appendices I and II).

¹¹ Van Niel, p. 57. Italics added.

¹² It is this organizational novelty, clearly derived from the West, that has encouraged some Western scholars to interpret Indonesian (and Southeast Asian) nationalism as a Western import, and to date the beginnings of this nationalism to the formation of Western-style organizations. (For example, the founding of the Young Men's Buddhist Association in Rangoon in 1906 is often taken to mark the onset of the Burmese nationalist movement.) Cf. B. Harrison, *Southeast Asia, A Short History* (London, Macmillan, 1954), pp. 236-7.

¹³ For example, L.M. Sitorus, in his standard *Sedjarah Pergerakan Kebangsaan Indonesia* (Jakarta, 1951), p. 6, writes: 'Till the end of the 19th century, the coloured peoples still slept soundly, while the whites were busily at work in every field'.

¹⁴ *School tot Opleiding van Inlandsche Artsen* - School for the Training of Native Doctors.

¹⁵ Van Niel, p. 224.

a central figure in pre-independence Indonesian politics.¹⁶ On his death in 1938 he was mourned by thousands as a devoted servant of his people.¹⁷ A successful graduate of the most advanced Western-style school in the Netherlands Indies, he could, in the first two decades of the century, be regarded as the epitome of all that was *muda*, *maju*, and *sadar*.¹⁸ By chance, Soetomo was also the first prominent Indonesian to write something like an autobiography, the well-known *Kenang-Kenangan* — a title which can be translated as 'Memoirs', but is really better rendered as 'Memories'. It seems reasonable, therefore, that the study of this 'autobiography' may offer clues as to what it meant to be a member of the generation of the 'awakened', and, more generally, of the way in which past, present and future were conceived of and linked together in the mind of that generation's most enduring political personality.¹⁹

Before exploring *Kenang-Kenangan*, however, we may remind ourselves of the main facts of Soetomo's life. He was born in the village of Ngepeh, near Nganjuk, East Java, on 30 July 1888.²⁰ His maternal grandfather was a well-to-do *kepalang* (superior village headman) who had earlier served in the Binnenlandsch Bestuur (territorial native administration). His father was a very able teacher and administrator who rose to the rank of *wedana*, then the highest bureaucratic rank normally open to Javanese not born to aristocratic *bupati* families.²¹ Up to the age of six, Soetomo was brought up by his maternal grandparents. Then he was sent to a Dutch-language primary school (ELS) in Bangil. It is an indication of his privileged educational background that in 1895, the year he probably was enrolled, there were no more than 1,135 Indonesians enrolled in such primary schools throughout the Netherlands Indies.²² In 1903, largely at his father's

¹⁶ For details on these parties, see J.M. Pluvier, *Overzicht van de ontwikkeling der nationalistische beweging in Indonesië in de jaren 1930 tot 1942* (The Hague, van Hoeve, 1953).

¹⁷ 'Fifty thousand people followed his bier; the image of this man of the people lived in the hearts of the masses who had so much to thank him for. Soetomo was indeed an extraordinary figure, one of the noblest leaders of the nationalist movement in its decades-old history . . .', D.M.G. Koch, *Batig Slot. Figuren uit het oude Indië* (Amsterdam, De Brug/Djambatan, 1960), p. 145. The standard general account of Soetomo's life is Imam Supardi, *Dr. Soetomo, Riwajat Hidup dan Perjuangannya* (Jakarta, 1951).

¹⁸ This is the judgment of Nagazumi, p. 34. For details on the evolution of the STOVIA, and the character of its curriculum and student body, see Van Niel, p. 16.

¹⁹ For some discussion of Indonesian autobiography, see S. Scherer, 'Harmony and Dissonance: Early Nationalist Thought in Java' (M.A. thesis, Cornell, 1975), pp. 188-9. For specific studies in Indonesian biography and autobiography, see Scherer's treatment of Soetomo, Tjipto Mangoenkoesomo and Ki Hadjar Dewantoro; Taufik Abdullah, 'Modernization in the Minangkabau World: West Sumatra in the Early Decades of the Twentieth Century', in *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*, pp. 179-245; R. Mrazek, 'Tan Malaka: A Political Personality's Structure of Experience', *Indonesia*, 14 (1972), pp. 1-48; and J.D. Legge, *Sukarno, A Political Biography* (New York, Praeger, 1972).

²⁰ He was thus an almost exact contemporary of Ho Chi Minh and Dr. Ba Maw.

²¹ See Scherer, pp. 191-200 for further detail. Here *bupati* refers to Java's traditional provincial nobility.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 30.

insistence, he entered the STOVIA. He was then fourteen years of age. He was graduated in 1911 and subsequently, by the contractual terms of his initial enrolment, worked as a government doctor in various parts of Java and Sumatra. In 1917, while stationed in Blora, he met a widowed Dutch nurse and married her. Two years later he was given the opportunity to continue his medical studies in Holland, returning home only in 1923. He was by then prominent enough to be selected as a member of the Surabaya Municipal Council. But shortly thereafter he resigned from this position and formed the first and most famous of the political 'study clubs' of the 1920s. From that time until his death in 1938, he was immersed in nationalist politics.²³

Such is the skeletal outline of Soetomo's life, one which follows in abbreviated form the fuller picture presented in Imam Supardi's quiet hagiography. In what ways does Soetomo's 'autobiography' correspond to this silhouette? Scarcely at all. There is, for example, virtually no mention of his political successes or failures in the thirty years that followed the founding of Budi Utomo. We learn of his political activities only in passing — as, for instance, when he compassionately describes his wife having to cook constantly for the stream of student visitors to their house in Holland.²⁴ The very structure of the 'autobiography' is rather strange and hardly follows what we imagine as the contours of Soetomo's historical life. The first 48 pages are devoted to his parents and grandparents, and the last 57 to his school-friends (and political comrades), his wife, and some old family retainers. Only the central 30 pages deal substantively with his own life — and they close with his schooldays in Batavia.

In a notice to his readers, and in a brief preface, Soetomo gives some accounting of this shape:

As mentioned in the introduction to this book, the purpose of the writer in writing this book of memories is the desire to accede to the requests of various people who would like to understand the story [*riwayat*] of my life. In this book I do not set down the story of my life²⁵ in the plainest terms, because, as mentioned in the introduction, it is inappropriate for me to be the one to write my story. I [therefore] only depict various excerpts [*pungutan*] from the stories of various people who were connected with my life, so that, from the excerpts of the stories of these people, my story can be envisaged...²⁶

²³ Supardi, pp. 2-8.

²⁴ R. Soetomo, *Kenang-Kenangan* (Surabaya, 1934), pp. 118-19.

²⁵ Although in modern Indonesian the terms *penghidupan* and *kehidupan* have rather different meanings (perhaps 'style of life' and 'life'), Soetomo seems to use them interchangeably in this passage.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, inside of cover.

For a long time now, and from various quarters, I have received requests to write the history of my life (*biografie*). Above all from my own group there have been not a few requests of this type. In addition, several journalists have made the same request. But I rejected them all, for I am of the opinion that it is inappropriate for a man to make a history of the life of someone who has not yet returned to eternity [*belum pulang ke zaman yang baka*], in other words the picture of his life is not yet completed . . .²⁷

So I have taken another way, whereby I can have the fullest opportunity to pay my respects to my forefathers and whoever else has helped me,²⁸ so that as a result my own *lelakon* can be thereby revealed.²⁹ Mindful of the Javanese saying *kacang mangsa ninggal lanjaran*, which means that a man's descendants will never abandon his qualities, by my describing the qualities and character of my forefathers the reader will easily be able to understand my true character.³⁰

The writer's hope is that with the publication of this book of memories . . . it can be used as a means for comparing conditions in the former time [*zaman dahulu*] with the present [*masa sekarang*] . . .³¹

Some of the more important themes of 'Memories' are already laid out in these modest explanatory words, which deserve some comment before we proceed further with the text.

First of all, it is striking that, though Western scholars have habitually referred to 'Memories' as an 'autobiography', Soetomo himself never uses the word, or any Indonesian-language version of it. He notes that he had long rejected requests to write his *biography*. Yet 'Memories' is not a biography in any ordinary sense. And even when he writes at length about his forefathers,

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3. Soetomo adds the Dutch word *biografie* in parentheses, as if he were uncertain that his Indonesian readers would understand the phrase 'history of my life'.

²⁸ Compare the words of another very Javanese Indonesian leader, communist party secretary-general Sudisman, in his defense speech before the Extraordinary Military Tribunal that sentenced him to death in 1967. 'I am a Communist who was born in Java, and therefore it is my duty, in accordance with the custom of the Javanese, to take my leave by saying: First, *matur nuwun*, I thank all those who have helped me in the course of the struggle . . .' Sudisman, *Analysis of Responsibility* (trans. B. Anderson) (Melbourne, The Works Cooperative, 1975), p. 24.

²⁹ *Lelakon* is a Javanese term that is notoriously impossible to translate. It is something like a mixture of 'destiny', 'role', 'life-aim', and 'moral responsibility'.

³⁰ Soetomo, p. 4. The saying literally means: 'how can the bean abandon the bean-pole?' The word *tabi'at*, translated here as 'character', could also be rendered as 'nature'.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

we are not given their biographies, but simply 'excerpts' or 'pluckings' from their 'stories'. Soetomo makes no attempt to place these ancestral figures in a maturing personal or historical context. They loom up in episodes to which no clear time can be assigned, except, as we shall see, for the significant markers *zaman dahulu* and *masa sekarang*.

I think we will not begin to make sense of this method of writing if we are not clear about the nature and assumptions of modern Western-style biography and autobiography. These literary forms are essentially about the interplay between 'person' and 'history'. 'History' is a global and linear framework for comprehending the evolution of man and society. 'Person' is the individual subjectivity which experiences this 'history' and takes part in it. The study of a man's life is therefore usually a study of his progress towards and absorption into his historical role. If parents and grandparents appear in such works, they serve to illuminate a social, economic and psychological context out of which the 'person' emerges — or a sort of starting-line from which to judge his performance in the race to come. The fundamental movement of such texts is therefore *away* from ancestry towards the 'individuals'. They are analogous to paintings built up on canvas and easel by the constant addition of small new dabs of colour until an unexpected whole (the work of art) appears.

In 'Memories' we find, I think, a method that is more analogous to that of classical sculpture — the discovery of essential form in the contingency of stone or other raw materials. The homely folk-saying *kacang mangsa ninggal lanjutan* implies a very different sense of person and time than is typical of Western biography or autobiography. For, as we shall see, here history appears not as the painter, who gives a life its essential meaning, but as contingency, the raw stone through which the search for an essential nature is pursued. Soetomo's pages about his parents are not meant to show the social and psychological environment out of which the nationalist leader goes to meet his destiny, but rather to reveal the *lanjaran* towards which the *kacang* seeks its homeward-wending way. We are, in effect, being shown the character (nature) of his ancestry, *towards* which his life's movement tends. The quest is not for individual fulfillment or historical uniqueness, but for reunion and identification. It is in this sense, by showing the nature of his ancestors, that Soetomo can invite his readers, who know his historical role, to see what his nature really is.³² In a context where historical time is so

³² This is no less true of all the other personages who appear in 'Memories'. There are a few occasions when some of them seem to change — for example, Soetomo's ambitious mother learns the hard way that official position does not always bring happiness. But Soetomo makes it clear that the real 'she' has not changed at all. She has simply lost some illusions about the nature of the world. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

adventitious, chronology is necessarily of minor importance; this is why, I believe, Soetomo's own life and those of his forefathers appear to us in the pages of 'Memories' so fragmented, episodic and unanchored.³³

In the second place, the generally melancholy tone of 'Memories' is set from the start. Soon after the basic draft was written, his beloved wife died, and the last-minute addition that Soetomo devotes to her is marked by some spare, anguished language. He records also the deaths of the two other people whom he most admired: Goenawan Mangoenkoesoemo, a friend so close that Dr Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, Goenawan's elder brother, referred to their relationship as that of *wayang* (puppet) and *dalang* (puppeteer);³⁴ and his father — an event that, as he observes himself, was crucial to his sudden emergence as the leading spirit of Budi Utomo. But the tone of melancholy has deeper causes than these personal losses. It derives, I think, from what we have seen in the last quoted passage from Soetomo's preface, signalled there and throughout 'Memories' by the repeated contrast between *zaman dahulu* and *masa sekarang*. There are times when one seems to get a clear idea of the nature of the contrast between these 'times', if not of the point of transition between them. Soetomo records asking villagers in Ngepeh what it was like in the *zaman dahulu*:

The villagers answered: 'Tuan, there was nothing to equal conditions in the *zaman* of Lurah Kadji [Soetomo's grandfather]'. What was the difference? '*In that time*, the time of Lurah Kadji, people were absolutely forbidden [by Lurah Kadji] to rent their land to the [sugar] factories'.³⁵

He describes his grandfather's education in the following terms:

³³ Nothing could be more striking in this regard than the fact that *Kenang-Kenangan* makes no mention of the three most 'world-shaking' events experienced by Southeast Asians in the early years of the 20th century: Asian Japan's stunning defeat of European Russia in 1905; the outbreak of World War I in 1914; and the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917. By contrast, almost all later Indonesian memoirs are tightly linked to the ongoing march of world history. See, for example, Sutan Sjahrir, *Out of Exile* (trans. C. Wolf, Jr.) (New York: John Day, 1949); *Sukarno: An Autobiography as Told to Cindy Adams* (Indianapolis, Bobbs-Merrill, 1965); and Ali Sastroamidjojo, *Tonggak-tonggak di Perjalananku* (Jakarta, Kinta, 1974).

³⁴ When Goenawan died, Tjipto is said to have remarked: 'Now Soetomo has lost his *dalang*'. Soetomo, p. 95.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13. Italics added.

He was the son of a rich man who used to be headman there. For that reason, *if one looks at his time*, he received an adequate education. He was sent from *pesantren* to *pesantren*,³⁶ wherever there were famous teachers. Because of his travels my grandfather had a rather broad perspective. According to what people say, it was only in the *pesantren* of Sepanjang (near Surabaya) that he got a broad and adequate *ilmu*.³⁷ *At that time*, there was no *sekolahan* yet.³⁸ Aside from studying Quranic recitation, he also learned to read and write Javanese and Malay, and studied *ilmu falak* [astronomy], which explains the course of the stars and moon. He also studied *ilmu kebathinan*³⁹ and *ilmu kedotan* (the knowledge whereby one is not wounded if stabbed and if struck feels no pain)⁴⁰. *In the time* of my grandfather, youngsters were very fond of *sport* [sic] and art (*kunst*). One was not a man if one could not ride a saddleless horse and did not dare to stand up on the horse's back. One was also not a man if one could not use bow and arrow and handle a lance. Dance and *nembang* [classical Javanese singing] were a part of art which self-respecting youngsters had to know, while *rampok harimau* was a sport widely popular among the People.⁴¹

And here is Soetomo's description of his grandfather offering his guests refreshments:

³⁶ *Pesantren* – traditional Javanese Islamic school. Here, as elsewhere, Soetomo first gives the Javanese word and then translates it into Indonesian for his non-Javanese readers.

³⁷ The semantics of this passage are significant. Soetomo always uses the highly respectful 'deep' word *ilmu* (clearly a translation of the Javanese *ngelmu*) for 'traditional' Javanese and Islamic studies. The sense is always knowledge of what is 'real' or ontologically true. So far as I have been able to discover he never uses this word for things learned in Dutch schools.

³⁸ *Sekolahan*, an indigenization of the Dutch word for school, has no particular resonances. Soetomo's laconic reference here leaves one in doubt about his stance towards these Westernized schools. One might imagine that the sentence should be understood to run parallel to 'no one yet rented their land to the sugar factories'.

³⁹ *Ilmu kebathinan* – knowledge of the inward – is the highest form of traditional Javanese religious learning, commonly referred to by Westerners as 'Javanese mysticism'.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 10-11. Italics added.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 12. Italics added. *Rampok harimau* is an Indonesian translation of the Javanese *rampog macan* – a gladiatorial battle between a panther or tiger and a group of armed men.

If one looks *at the time*, it is not surprising that my grandfather gave his laborers genever [Dutch gin]. *At that time*, too, even though people were already beginning to be aware [*sadar*] and ashamed [*malu*], there were many occasions when my grandfather would offer his guests opium . . . In olden times [*zaman kuno*], smoking opium was regarded as a sign and instrument of high status and luxury.⁴²

The ambiguity of these descriptions undermines any initial confidence that the two 'times' correspond either to two historical periods or to 'tradition' and 'modernity'.⁴³ At no point does Soetomo express either nostalgia or contempt for the education of his grandfather. All we get is the enigmatic 'if one looks at the time'. Genever was a Dutch import into Java, and probably opium too, at least on a large scale, but here both appear as emblems of the *zaman kuno*.⁴⁴ There is no clear indication of the relationship between *sadar* and *malu* (this is one of the rare occasions when these words occur in 'Memories'). Social evolution? Political development? Cultural enlightenment? Or the transformation Hildred Geertz describes from *durung Jawa* (not yet Javanese, unaware, not knowing shame) to *wis Jawa* (Javanese, aware, knowing shame), transposed from Javanese children to Javanese society as a whole?⁴⁵

The ambiguous relationship of past and present is nowhere better expressed than in the vivid episode where Soetomo describes his discomfort at the kind of village justice his grandfather meted out. The old man would tie village offenders to the pillars of his *pendapa* (a sort of wall-less front pavilion to the headman's house) for several days at a time. 'When I was adult, I had already been influenced by the writings of Multatuli⁴⁶ — the foremost champion of

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 17. Italics added. The word translated as 'high status' is *kebangsaan*, which usually means 'nationality' or 'race'. I suspect that it may be a misprint for *kebangsawanan* (noble rank).

⁴³ Yet note that, from our historical perspective, the *zaman kuno* must roughly coincide with Rongawarsita's Time of Darkness.

⁴⁴ The phallic hero of the *Suluk Gatoloco* is described as a devoted opium-user.

⁴⁵ H. Geertz, *The Javanese Family: A Study of Kinship and Socialization* (Glencoe, The Free Press, 1961), p. 105.

⁴⁶ The reference is to the famous colonial iconoclast Eduard Douwes Dekker (1820-1887) who under the pen-name Multatuli ('I have suffered much') published a largely autobiographical novel called *Max Havelaar* in 1859. A vitriolic attack on the injustices of 19th century colonial administration and the cruelty and corruption of the co-opted Javanese ruling class, it created a sensation, and helped to arouse a movement for reform in the Indies.

seizing and protecting the rights of our people – and I asked my grandfather what power [*kekuasaan*] gave him the right to be so bold as to sentence villagers in this way.⁴⁷ Here one might expect a conventional contrast of traditional and modern, old and new. But the story proceeds in an unexpected way, for the grandfather explains that his punishments are actually a *reform* – previously, criminals were sent away to jails in towns. Since, in his view, they typically returned as hardened characters, he created a new ‘local’ system of justice which would keep them within the village community. Soetomo concludes with these words:

So, though I could not agree with his stance, I could understand the reasons why my grandfather established these rules. And therefore, although I was already influenced by the new current [*aliran baru*], my respect for him did not diminish in the least, *especially if one looks at his time* . . .⁴⁸

Soetomo’s reference here to being influenced by Multatuli and the rather obscure ‘new current’ is one of the very rare instances where ‘new thinking’ is mentioned in ‘Memories’. But one does not get a strong feeling that the implications are ‘developmental’ or ‘progressive’ at all. The adult Soetomo simply did not initially understand his grandfather’s reforms. There is neither an endorsement of his grandfather’s actions nor an insistence on the correctness of the ‘new current’. One merely senses a certain asymmetrical separation in moral stance. Soetomo, standing on his own moral ground, has learned to understand and to retain respect for his grandfather. But the old man does not reciprocate, calmly confident of his good judgment.⁴⁹

Over and over again in ‘Memories’ this picture of connection and separation occurs. The ancestors remain ‘achieved’, self-contained figures, fully manifesting and representing their ancestral qualities. When they quarrel, as Soetomo’s grandfather and father are described as doing, they quarrel in a wholly unironical and representational way.⁵⁰ The father objects to the views of his father-in-law on the proper career for his son, but on the matter-of-fact grounds that they are practically and morally wrong. The two men are separated by their quarrel, but united in the solid way they fill up their skins. Soetomo, their descendant, is not only bound to their ‘qualities’ and ‘character’, but sees this ‘bondedness’ in a strange, new, detached way. He does not say that his ancestors’ views are

⁴⁷ Soetomo, p. 13

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 14. Italics added.

⁴⁹ Soetomo presents a vivid contrast to Multatuli. One of the things that most outraged the Dutchman was the personalized (i.e., arbitrary) ‘justice’ meted out by powerful native officials.

⁵⁰ See below, p. 237. The relevant passages in *Kenang-Kenangan* are at pp. 66-8.

'wrong', precisely because he sees them as bathed in 'time'. Soetomo's separation from his forefathers is located exactly at this conceptual level: that he perceives himself and them encased in different 'times'. Yet the *connection* is at the level of that pluralized perception. Here are signs of a new 'watching self', of a distancing between person and culture. It looks very much, too, as if Soetomo is embarking on the construction of an *idea of a Tradition*. For what, in the end, is a Tradition, so understood, but a way of making connections in separation, of acknowledging by not repeating? The distinction between *zaman dahulu* and *masa sekarang*, then, is probably less one of historical epochs than of altered states of consciousness.

At the same time, we shall not exhaust the meaning of the term *zaman dahulu* if we do not juxtapose it to other uses of the word *zaman*. For example, we find him writing that it would be better for others to write the story of his life 'after I have escaped from this fleeting time [*zaman yang fana*]';⁵¹ or that it is inappropriate for a man's history to be written before he returns to 'eternal time [*zaman yang baka*]'.⁵² Repeatedly, he says that in this *zaman yang fana* 'no happiness or suffering lasts for ever'.⁵³ In another passage he uses the old image of the 'turning world'.⁵⁴ In these figures there is, of course, something quite traditionally Javanese; but it would be inadequate to stress this point alone. What is more significant is their new relation to the other uses of *zaman*. In traditional Javanese thought there was, as it were, a natural consonance between the movement of a man's life and the movement of the cosmos. The turning wheel is an image of motion and stillness, departure and return. The form of universal time is one of creation and destruction, and again creation and destruction.⁵⁵ Man is born into this *zaman yang fana*, lives his life and then, as Soetomo puts it, 'returns' to the *zaman yang baka*. The circle is completed and another generation starts a new cycle. So, for traditional Javanese man, death was the point towards which life moved, and in some sense becoming Javanese was learning to live in rhythm with this movement.⁵⁶

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 4.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁵⁵ See my 'Idea of Power', esp. pp. 19-22.

⁵⁶ I remember well how my former music-teacher in Jakarta, one of the most distinguished classical musicians of his generation, gradually divested himself of all his possessions and family responsibilities as he saw his end approaching. Nothing more gently determined could be imagined.

It is clear that Soetomo understood and accepted an idea of time which could be either fleeting or eternal, an idea in which, indeed, that distinction overrode all others. In this sense he was a traditional Javanese. But he was also a man who had been educated in a Western-style medical school, of which Darwinism was the cosmological underpinning, and for which death was defeat.⁵⁷ In this mode of consciousness, the cosmos no longer turned, but moved on, up, ahead, and death was not 'return' but the real end of a man. Soetomo was thus fully exposed to the fundamental disjuncture of progressive Western thought – history as species development and life as individual decay. 'Memories' shows that he was not only influenced by the 'new current' (with all the ironies sprung tight within the phrase), but saw it within two quite different conceptions of time – and thereby found a recording self within.

Let us now turn to the central part of 'Memories' where the life of Soetomo moves to its intersection with what today is taken as national history – the founding of Budi Utomo. Soetomo begins his account of his own life with six years of great happiness spent at the home of his grandfather in Ngepeh. It is a section of 'Memories' characterized by two contrasting themes: the basic harmony of village life and Soetomo's own unpleasant and destructive behaviour in it. The harmony of village life is not conveyed in the way that many later Indonesian nationalist leaders would figure it, in statements *about* that harmony and its ideological and cultural basis. Rather it emerges in a way that is both typically Javanese and strongly reminiscent of the writing of Indonesia's greatest author, Pramoedya Ananta Toer. Here is Soetomo's description of a major village occasion:

When the time came for *sambatan* – a request for help in carrying out some project that required many hands – a very big reception took place in the *pendapa* of my grandfather's house. Dozens were given food there, so that the big *pendapa* was full of people. The kitchen too was full of people working and serving those who were eating. *Sambatan* was usually performed when people were working the rice-fields. During the *sambatan* the rice-fields were bustling with villagers full of joy. Dozens of people were ploughing or harrowing side by side. 'Her, her, her' or 'Giak, giak, giak', signal-words to oxen or carabao, could constantly be heard here and there. *Tembang* and *uran-uran*,⁵⁸ sung by those at work, made the hearts of those who saw and heard them filled with joy.

⁵⁷ On the impact of Darwinian conceptions in Java in the early 20th century, see, for example, B. Dahm, *History of Indonesia in the Twentieth Century* (New York, Praeger, 1971), p. 30; Nagazumi, pp. 45, 53, 185 n. 80.

⁵⁸ *Tembang* – classical Javanese songs; *uran-uran* – folk-songs.

It was not only humankind that was drawn to and could experience the atmosphere, from the influence of this joy and happiness. It was as though the oxen and carabao also shared this joy of heart, shared in the seductive sound of that melodious and exalted *tembang* and *uran-uran*. Slowly, with steady pace, step by step, the oxen and carabao walked on, dragging ploughs and harrows and chewing their cud. Sometimes, goaded by the flies that settled on and crawled over their bodies, they swung their horned heads from left to right, fanning their tails as well. Hearing the crack of the whip — though pestered by the flies — the oxen and carabao walked on, walked on, mindful of and fulfilling their duty. Seeing such a peaceful scene, who would not share the fresh coolness in their heart, when everything was so tranquil and pleasing to the heart? What more could be hoped or asked for on this earth? Perhaps because of this feeling, because of the peace and unity of nature and living creatures, farmers find it hard to change their nature, a nature that loves this calm and peace. When work ceased about 11 o'clock, in the *pendapa* plates of rice, dishes and pitchers were laid out in rows, awaiting the arrival of those who were coming to eat. Clamorous was the sound of the people heading for the *pendapa* . . . Very often I was seated in the lap of one of the people in the *pendapa*, facing the various bamboo plates and wooden trays filled with betel and tobacco, with a joyful heart because I was listening to the jokes of those who were filling their bellies. One by one, after each had eaten his fill, they came to where I was, to accept their share — a roll of betel with its accompanying ingredients and with tobacco. Anyone who knew me or who was rather bold, with kindly face and much laughter would play with me by caressing that part of my body which is not fit to be mentioned here. Who would not feel happy, who would not feel the desire to be at one, with the fullest love, with those farmers?⁵⁹

My playmates were Sadimin and Tjengek, who at that time were youngsters. They shared in looking after me by playing their flutes. Tjengek was a young blind boy, but it was as though he was never sad, always gay and joking. Only the voice of his flute, when it was blown, made a sound that was terrifying and moved the heart, as though hoping for some hope that could never be attained . . .⁶⁰

⁵⁹ Soetomo, pp. 15-16.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 58. Compare Pramoedya Ananta Toer's beautiful story 'Anak Haram' in his *Tjerita dari Biora* (Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1952), pp. 227-62.

The most striking thing about these descriptions is the way they are filled with sound, not words. Words may be alluded to, as in the case of Tjengek's jokes, but we know nothing of their content. No need to give words, except those without signification,⁶¹ for the sense of happiness (and of Tjengek's anguish) comes from sheer sound. The image of harmony is conveyed precisely by the absence of any separation between sound and meaning. (The harmony is only 'spoiled' by the adult Soetomo, who, by writing words, tries to catch what to be caught cannot be spoken.)

By contrast, Soetomo describes his childhood self in the most unflattering terms. He was very spoilt, could twist his grandparents round his little finger, enjoyed whining to them about his uncles and aunts, and seeing the latter reduced to tears.⁶² 'I felt myself extremely naughty, acted like a king and treated the people connected with me . . . in a quite arbitrary way.'⁶³ Later, when he went to school, he was 'spendthrift, arrogant, and proud if I could deceive my parents by asking for extra money on the pretext of needing books or a jacket, but actually to treat my friends or anyone else, if I happened to be going for snacks . . .'.⁶⁴ He liked to fight, was very lazy about his studies, and regularly used to cheat on his examinations.⁶⁵ He was jealous of his younger brother, whom he felt was favoured by his parents. On one occasion he felt so mortified by this discrimination that he rode off into the woods and burst into tears of anger and self-pity.⁶⁶ He used to steal as well.⁶⁷ There is only one aspect of his childhood character that he admires in retrospect — his rage at injustice and willingness to fight it.⁶⁸ But generally we are given a clear picture of a person with the traits least approved of by Javanese, and least like his forefathers, who in different ways are described as serious, hard-working, far-sighted, responsible and 'deep' people. One need not doubt that some of this is true and that Soetomo was indeed a spoilt and troublesome child. What is interesting, however, is that he makes so much of his bad behaviour.⁶⁹ As will become apparent later, the point is certainly *not* that the 'person' Soetomo developed forward from naughty child to respected national leader.

⁶¹ For example, *her* and *giak*, sounds used to turn the oxen to the right and left.

⁶² Soetomo, p. 55.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 56.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 65 and 68.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 64.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 65. For more on this, see below, p. 236.

⁶⁹ The full point of this emphasis will be brought out below pp. 239-43. To all this there is a remarkable parallel in the autobiography of the Burmese leader U Nu, *Saturday's Son* (trans. U Law Yone) (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1975). In Chapter 1 ('Flaming Youth') Nu cheerfully describes himself as a youthful liar, cheat, thief, brothel-frequenter, and dabbler in cocaine and opium. In his case, however, I am convinced that a systematic correspondence with the structure of the Gautama Buddha's life is intended.

As mentioned earlier, Soetomo was first sent to a Dutch-language elementary school in Bangil, before being enrolled in the STOVIA. While in Bangil, he stayed with a maternal uncle. He gives us two main 'Memories' from this time in his life. The first is what he learned from this uncle, who is introduced to the reader in a rather curious way. Soetomo writes:

[He] was an individual who was very strange in his manner of eating and drinking, let alone of sleeping . . . [He] rarely ate like ordinary people, and he mainly slept in the middle of the floor, on a chair. So too, after I had been Islamized [*diselamkan* – circumcized], as a result of his teaching I was ashamed to eat to the point my belly felt full. At that time I usually ate just once a day, and took care not to feel full and satisfied. If one found oneself in the midst of eating something extremely tasty, went my uncle's teachings, one should stop and not continue eating. Also, every evening I had to step outside the house, at least twice a night, and he required me to study how to have power over [*berkuasa*] the course of my thoughts. They had to be given direction, just like the desires of my own heart. To this end, every night I had to gaze with a calm mind to the West, East, North and South, while Heaven and Earth too were not to be neglected. At that time, I did not fully understand the purpose of all this. But if I did not carry out this kind of obligation, my thoughts seemed impure and confused; while the act of gazing ahead, behind, left, right, above and below would bring cool freshness to my heart.⁷⁰

What is remarkable about this passage is not the behaviour of the uncle – which is quite normal for a Javanese *priyayi* steeped in the meditative practices of *kebathinan* culture. Rather it is that Soetomo should *describe* it as strange – and then go on to show that it became second nature to him. I suspect that we are to understand the word 'strange' in two ways: the strangeness of the uncle's behaviour as it appeared to the child Soetomo who was still 'not yet Javanese'; and the strangeness felt by the new 'watching self' in recording the long-past experience of the inner self (*bathin*).

The second interesting aspect of Soetomo's years in Bangil is what he tells of his activities in the elite *sekolahan* of his primary school:

⁷⁰ Soetomo, p. 65. It is hard to know how to translate the latter part of this quotation, since the Indonesian has no indicator of tense. It may be that Soetomo is here referring simultaneously to past and present.

My teachers and Dutch schoolmates never humiliated me – *quite the opposite*. But if I heard insulting words addressed to other Javanese students, like *pentol*⁷¹ or 'Javanese' – my listening ears burned. And if there was any situation that was unjust [*tidak adil*] I also acted, so that quite often I fought with the children at that school. I never won, for the Dutch pupils were bigger and stronger than my friends, and they could easily beat me down.⁷²

The description is quite matter-of-fact. But it is the first time in 'Memories' that Soetomo speaks of himself favourably, even if wryly. The reader has learned in earlier passages of 'Memories' that one essential aspect of Soetomo's father's nature was precisely his concern for justice (*keadilan*).⁷³ One could say then that the young Soetomo is starting to grow closer to the ancestral qualities. But he also goes out of his way to show that he was not ill-treated by his Dutch teachers or fellow-pupils, 'quite the opposite'. It is important to see this not as a boast of his social acceptability to the Dutch,⁷⁴ but as a way of showing that the struggle for justice must involve an absence of personal interest (*pamrih*).⁷⁵ For in the Javanese tradition one does not seek justice for oneself, but out of commitment to one's *darma* (duty). The story thus has a double significance. It shows both a growing (sociological) consciousness of the racial injustices of colonial society, from which an intensifying nationalist movement was to grow, and a 'deep' Javanese in the process of formation.

Following his account of his clashes with Dutch schoolchildren, Soetomo describes his holidays back at Ngepeh. Returning to his grandfather's home was 'living in freedom with respect to naughtiness and pleasure. There I was spoiled and praised till I felt myself a truly extraordinary child'.⁷⁶ Yet the very next thing he records is his very ordinary fear of lightning and thunder. When storms came he would run and hide his head in his grandmother's lap. But then his grandfather would take him by the hand and say to him 'sweetly and gently':

⁷¹ *Pentol* – coarse Javanese for 'idiot' or 'dummy'. Even today one can hear this phrase on non-Javanese lips.

⁷² Soetomo, p. 65. Italics added.

⁷³ Among many vivid examples perhaps the most affecting is Soetomo's account of his father's 'hypermodern' (sic) attitude towards women. He was so 'progressive' in wanting to give his daughters a good Dutch education that his neighbours suspected that he had become a Christian! 'Very often in the evening, after work, he would take his daughters on his lap, one by one, or would support them with slow, quiet singing of *tembang*. And very often he would let fall some words on the injustice (*ketidakadilan*) of our people towards women.' *Ibid.*, pp. 48-9.

⁷⁴ Compare the smug, colonial way in which Abu Hanifah, a leader of the political generation after Soetomo's, describes how he was fully accepted by the Dutch, unlike his friends and classmates, because of his superior understanding of the Dutch language and Western ways. Abu Hanifah, *Tales of a Revolution* (Sydney, Angus and Robertson, 1972), pp. 39-40.

⁷⁵ On *pamrih* in Javanese thinking, see my 'Idea of Power', pp. 38-43.

⁷⁶ Soetomo, p. 66. Note the interesting *negative* use of *kemerdekaan* (freedom), jewel-word to a later generation of Indonesians, in this moral context.

Le, kowe aja wedi karo bledég. Kowe rak turunan Ki Ageng Selo, mengko bledég rak wedi dewe. Soetomo translates this for his non-Javanese readers thus: 'Child,⁷⁷ do not fear the lightning. Are you not the descendant of Ki Ageng Selo? Surely the lightning will come to be afraid of you'. Soetomo concludes: 'And because of the conviction in his words, gradually I lost my fear of thunder and lightning, however terrible their voice'.⁷⁸

It is difficult not to see in this passage, coming directly after Soetomo's defeats at the hands of the Dutch children, a veiled allusion to the struggle of Indonesians generally against the Dutch, 'however terrible their voice'. But, in addition, we may note that courage here comes from memory — memory of one's origins. One grows up by growing back.

Next, Soetomo turns to the reasons why he became a student in the STOVIA, in a section entitled 'Why I followed my father's wishes'.⁷⁹ Here he describes the bitter conflict between his father and grandfather on the subject of his future. His grandfather desperately wanted Soetomo to become a high official. He used to urge the boy to refuse if his father tried to send him to medical school. His father, overwhelmed by the frustrations and humiliations of the native official life, would have none of it for his son. Soetomo gives us two reasons why he followed his father's wishes and, somewhat surprisingly, tells us at what age each reason took effect. At the age of eight, he was childishly impressed by the white uniforms of the STOVIA students, which seemed much grander than the black garments worn by government officials. The second reason 'happened' when he was about thirteen:

At that time my father was an Assistant *Wedana* in Glodok, and once it so happened that I was at home. Very early in the morning my father had to go to Magetan in a *bendi*.⁸⁰ About 4 a.m., my mother was already seated before the charcoal fire, toasting bread for breakfast, and I and my little brother were already awake. We saw father coming out of his room, already dressed in his official clothes, standing before us and grumbling about the status [*derajat*]

⁷⁷ *Le* is probably untranslatable. A short form of *kontole* (penis), it is the usual affectionate Javanese term of address to a small boy. Javanese folklore has it that when the lightning attempted to strike the magically powerful Ki Ageng Selo, the sage seized it and tied it firmly to a nearby tree. The sobbing lightning was only released when it promised never to strike a descendant of its captor. These descendants — the people of Java — would be identified by the leaves of the prison-tree worn on their hats. To this day, some Javanese villagers wear these leaves if they are out in the open in thundery weather.

⁷⁸ Soetomo, p. 66. Note again, what is impressive to Soetomo is the conviction *in* the words, i.e., the *sound* more than the meaning.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-8.

⁸⁰ *Bendi* — horse-drawn two-wheeled carriage. In parts of rural Java even today the *bendi* is a status symbol.

of anyone who worked as a *priyayi* of the Binnenlandsch Bestuur Because my father went on and on grumbling, I asked him: 'Father, why do you do this work then?' My question was immediately answered: 'If I did not do this work, would all of you be able to eat bread and butter?'⁸¹ The word *korban* and the meaning of this word I did not yet understand, but hearing it in my inmost self [*bathin*] I revered my father deeply. 'I have only one request to make of you', so my father continued, 'I ask that none of my children grow up to be *priyayi* B [innenlandsch] B [estuur]'.⁸²

In this passage we still see Soetomo as a child who 'does not yet understand [*belum mengerti*]' – a phrase, it may be noted, that he never uses for any Western-style teaching that he later receives. But the narration here is really more remarkable than the event. For while we can be sure that Soetomo's father 'historically' spoke to his son in Javanese, his words here are given in Indonesian.⁸³ And we observe that Soetomo is caught by the word *korban* – which does not occur in the sentences his father utters! In one sense, it is clear what has happened. In his memory Soetomo must be recalling his father's words in Javanese, among them, very probably, *ngurban*. *Ngurban* is one of the deep moral and emotional words of Javanese, meaning to 'do without' in order to achieve some great goal, or to help someone in need. It precisely echoes the teachings of Soetomo's uncle in Bangil.⁸⁴ The child Soetomo was thus struck by a word he did not yet understand, of which he was not yet 'aware', but the understanding of which would later allow him to 'become Javanese'. The strange thing here, however, is the interlingual slippage. For the Indonesian sentence gives little sense of the moral exchange alluded to – which indeed has meaning primarily in a Javanese context. If Soetomo earlier translated his grandfather's words into Indonesian, now, perhaps involuntarily, he reverses course, moving from Indonesian back to Javanese. This is perhaps why he is not explicit about the lesson he learned. It may be that Soetomo, understanding something of his father's sacrifice, agreed to go to medical school, rather than become a *priyayi* B.B., out of gratitude and respect. Or, possibly, intimations of the idea of *ngurban* – giving direction to thoughts and desires for some greater purpose – led him to will his entry into an institution that would keep him permanently out of the old Javanese official elite and the traditional status hierarchy.

⁸¹ It is curious that Soetomo makes no particular point of this European-style breakfast, which must have been something of a rarity in the Javanese world of Madiun at the turn of the century.

⁸² *Ibid.*, pp. 67-8.

⁸³ This is true of all Soetomo's quotations from his father, whereas his grandfather's words are always first given in Javanese and then translated into Indonesian.

⁸⁴ See the account of how his grandfather won his higher-status wife by prolonged ascetic self-denial. *Ibid.*, p. 11. Cf. also my 'Idea of Power', pp. 8-10.

The following section of 'Memories' brings us to the STOVIA. The picture of the author as a dirty, naughty, lazy and spendthrift character is further elaborated. He takes nothing seriously since, if he is expelled, his grandfather will be pleased and his parents will support him anyway.⁸⁵ We learn almost nothing of what happens in the Westernized classroom, only of childish pranks. But the section closes with these significant words:

Even though I was still spendthrift, obstinate and naughty, yet about one year before my father left for eternal time [*zaman yang baka*] — it was only then that I understood that I too could work without copying (*nurun*) and thereby came the awareness [*kesadaran*] that working by copying is work in degradation.⁸⁶

At first sight, this seems quite straightforward. A lazy boy comes to see that cheating is bad and childish. Yet I think there is more involved. Soetomo's language, particularly the terms *nurun* and *kesadaran*, suggests complexities of two different kinds. He gives us a hint by first using the Indonesian word *meniru* (to imitate, copy) and then adding the Javanese-derived *nurun* in parentheses.⁸⁷ On the one hand, this seems a clear allusion to the whole issue of modernization as 'imitation' of the West, which haunted Soetomo's generation of Indonesian leaders.⁸⁸ Soetomo's readers in the 1930s would certainly have seen the words 'working by copying is work in degradation' in the context of the whole colonial experience. That *kesadaran* — the key word of early nationalist thought — is used in this small classroom episode suggests the larger meaning of the narration. On the other hand, we should remember the significance of the idea of *turun* in Javanese culture. Being a true *turunan* (descendant) means not abandoning the nature or qualities of one's forefathers. Imitation, in the sense of drawing close to this nature, is central to the genealogy of Javanese morals.⁸⁹ We have already seen that the most important parts of Soetomo's education so far have been the occasions when he learned to imitate, following his grandfather, his uncle or his father. So the passage quoted above gives us a pregnant image of the contrary directions of his dual education,

⁸⁵ Soetomo, p. 69.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ This is one of the very rare cases in 'Memories' where Soetomo first uses an Indonesian term and then 'explains' it in Javanese, rather than the other way round. *Nurun*, in the sense of cheating by copying, seems to have entered the Indonesian language from Javanese quite recently. For instance, it is not found in this sense in W.S. Poerwadarminta's standard *Kamus Umum Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta, Perpustakaan Perguruan Kementerian P.P. dan K., 1954).

⁸⁸ This view is supported, I think, by the placing of the passage in the text — immediately before Soetomo's 'change of nature'. See below, pp. 240-1.

⁸⁹ Imitation was, and is, a central tool of traditional Javanese pedagogy, whether in dance-schools or *pesantren*.

symbolized by the antagonistic Dutch and Javanese meanings of imitation. 'Not imitating' in the Dutch classroom means 'imitating' Dutch culture, in other words, absorbing its values seriously; this, however, implies 'not imitating' Javanese tradition, which extols 'imitation'. But it also foreshadows the nationalist solution — imitating one's forefathers by not imitating them. Being a good Javanese by becoming a good Indonesian.

We come finally to the moral centre of Soetomo's 'Memories', the section that he calls 'Change of Nature' [*Perubahan Perangai*].⁹⁰ Its content is simple but surprising, and in effect, perhaps for extra emphasis, it is told twice over. Soetomo has been accustomed to copying the work of his more industrious classmates. Then one day a teacher asks the class a question — in one case on algebra and in the other on physics. Seeing no one else prepared to answer, even the brightest, Soetomo raises his hand just for fun and discovers 'to my own astonishment' that he somehow knows the correct answer. This sudden ability is put in an interesting context:

The Director of the school had established a new system in my class, insisting that mathematics be taught over, so that the pupils could continually make use of their intellects The reader should understand that our class had hitherto been given lessons that could be followed with very little *intellect*, provided one's memory [*geheugen*] was sufficient.⁹¹

In the narrative the change in pedagogy is tied to Soetomo's discovery: "“Hey”, I thought, “in this case I too have a brain”". In other words, once the Dutch lessons stop being rote learning and imitation, Soetomo comes to perceive his own quality and capacity.⁹² 'From that time on, I grew ashamed to copy [*nurun*] any more.'⁹³ It is with this awareness of shame — as it were, 'becoming Javanese', but in the setting of a Western classroom — that Soetomo shows his 'nature' as having changed, so that he now can write:

⁹⁰ Soetomo, pp. 69-73.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 70. Note the use of Dutch terminology here — *intellect* and *geheugen*. It is suggestive of the wide divergence between Western and Javanese ideas of the components of personhood. Compare the earlier references to *bathin*, and the remarks on *budi* below, p. 245.

⁹² A further involution of the paradox of imitation.

⁹³ Soetomo, p. 71. But Soetomo adds that, because he understood so well the misery of those pupils regarded as 'stupid', he began regularly to help them with their work and to allow them to copy from him (p. 72). It is as if cheating is legitimate provided it is done without *pamrih*.

It was only about two years before my father left me that it appeared from the expression on his face that he had some hopes for me. This is understandable because at that time my nature began to change. From childhood up till then, my life had always depended on others . . .⁹⁴

About that time the character of his relations with his father also began to change. He no longer wrote home only to ask for money. He exchanged letters with his father about the proper education for his younger brothers and sisters.

My father began to have some esteem for me, whereas I *had drawn close to his bathin*. In this happy condition, full of good hope for the flourishing of my family, in a time [*zaman*] of glorious ideals, suddenly and quite unexpectedly, on 28 July 1907, came a telegram telling of my father's death.⁹⁵

Considering Soetomo's earlier account of his emotional relationship with his father as none too close,⁹⁶ the description of his feelings on the morrow of his bereavement may seem rather odd:

Who can feel for the trouble that then assailed me?⁹⁷ No one in this world but those in a situation like my own. Even at that time, let alone now, I could not describe the trouble and the darkness that were in my heart; and my closest friends, even though they shared my sorrow, could not console me. I thought of the lot of my mother, I thought of that of my little brothers and sisters with the death of my father. It was as though they had lost the umbrella that protected them, lost the staff on which they leaned, lost everything, every promise and foundation that they needed for their development. What had we done wrong? Was God just? . . .

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 74. Italics added.

⁹⁶ 'My relationship to and love for my parents, up till the day of my father's death, was not very close and intimate. I was not much at ease with my father and mother, so that to them I used high Javanese [*bahasa kromo*]. In addition, I felt not so much love as simply respect (*eerbied*). At that time, my love was directed only to my grandfather and grandmother.' *Ibid.*, p. 63.

⁹⁷ This sentence seems grammatically confused. Soetomo has *tiada merasai* (can not feel) when the sense requires simply *merasai*.

My father's death at that time contained this meaning for me: it was as though I had received a punishment, quite unexpectedly and of immeasurable severity, meaning the loss of dignity, humiliation and the rest I felt that people had changed their attitudes towards me and my family. The respectful words, the generosity, the sweetness of their talk and the kindness of some of our acquaintances appeared not to be genuine, but only an external veneer — and this was because of the influence of my father's death.⁹⁸

The people who came to console the family often stole his father's belongings, gossiped about his debts and speculated about how much property he had left his children. 'So I felt troubled and anguished, I felt humiliated, I felt deprived of honour, I felt that I lived like someone stripped stark naked in public At this time of great grief, when it seemed as if the sun no longer showed his rays, at this time it was only my grandfather and my uncle who eased my burden.'⁹⁹ In school he completely changed his behaviour: he stopped being spendthrift, naughty and lazy — to the point that a gulf opened between him and his friends.

And so my life changed. At night it was the stars and the moon that became my friends, to help me concentrate [*mengheningkan cipta*], so that I could succeed, as eldest son, in fulfilling my responsibilities . . .¹⁰⁰

My thoughts and feelings became separated from their environment, seeking another course for their life, heading in another direction which would bring them an opportunity to flower.¹⁰¹

There is no doubt that his father's death was a grave blow to Soetomo. He now became the head of the stricken family and had to assume the responsibilities involved. What is interesting in his description of that time, however, is his new perception of exterior and interior (*lahir* and *bathin*) and the

⁹⁸ Soetomo, pp. 74-5.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 76. *Mengheningkan cipta* (Javanese, *ngeningaken cipta*) means the practice of meditation for the concentration of one's inner being. Here Soetomo applies the teachings of his uncle in Bangil (cf. p. 235 above).

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 78.

separation he records himself experiencing from the world.¹⁰² This separation prepares the way for a denouement which is not depicted as such in 'Memories' but is prefigured in the passages cited above. For Soetomo now seeks to 'meet' his father and to live up to the moral responsibilities of family and tradition.¹⁰³ But he will do this by 'finding *another* direction . . . '.

Five months later, at the onset of the rains at the end of 1907, Dr Wahidin Soedirohoesodo arrived in Batavia to rest from his long search for funds to help intelligent young Javanese pursue Western education. During his stay, he came to speak to the STOVIA students. Here is how Soetomo describes that meeting, from which Budi Utomo was to be born a few months later:

The meeting with Dr Wahidin Soedirohoesodo, with his tranquil features, his wise manner and tone, and his conviction in explaining his ideals, left a deep impression on me. His melodious and *rustig* (Jav., *sareh*) voice opened up my thoughts and spirit, and brought me new ideals and a new world that could, it seemed, console my wounded heart. Speaking with Dr Wahidin, listening to his aims . . . removed all narrow feelings and goals limited to my own private needs. One became another person, one felt oneself in motion, trembling throughout one's flesh and bones, one's views became broad, one's feelings refined [*halus*], one's ideals beautiful . . . in short, one felt one's most high obligations in this world.¹⁰⁴

*

Here the 'autobiographical' part of 'Memories' comes to an end, with Soetomo just nineteen and Budi Utomo still unformed. The rest of the book records the services of Soetomo's friends, retainers and, above all, his wife.

¹⁰² This is figured in the disjuncture depicted between the sounds of the neighbours' words and their meaning. Contrast this disjuncture with the deep correspondence shown in Soetomo's accounts of the *sambatan* in Ngepoh (above, pp. 232-3) and of his feelings about Dr Wahidin (below, p. 243).

¹⁰³ There is probably a parallel here with one of the basic themes of the Javanese *wayang*: a young hero's separation from his father and long search to find him. The moment of maximum separation occurs when the devoted young man, alone in the forest except for a wise *guru* (Dr Wahidin?), practices meditation to find the means for completing his quest. The depth of his concentration produces the *gara-gara*, or churning of the cosmos (formation of Budi Utomo?). The play's resolution usually comes when the long-lost father acknowledges the hero as truly his descendant (*turunan*). On this theme, see K.G.P.A.A. Mangkunagara VII, *On the Wayang Kulit (Purwa) and its Symbolic and Mystical Elements* (trans. C. Holt) (Southeast Asia Program, Data Paper, no. 27) (Ithaca, 1957), pp. 11-16.

¹⁰⁴ Soetomo, pp. 80-1. In this passage, as so often, Soetomo turns from Dutch or Indonesian to Javanese to express the nuances of his feelings. Note that the very syntax of the closing sentence — the shift from 'I' to 'one' (my poor translation of *orang* here) — conveys the abandonment of egoism and *pamrih* — and perhaps a movement from Soetomo the individual to the whole audience of Javanese boys.

From these pages one can infer something of his later life, but that is not the focus of the writing. From Soetomo's perspective, I think, what is essential has already been said.

Had his life, in his own eyes, had a linear trajectory, had it run in some sense parallel to the movement of the world, the political events of 1907-1908 would have been a mere beginning. But I think that it should now be clear that the perceived movement of his life had another shape, not so much political, in our sense of the word, as moral. To specify this shape more clearly, it may be useful to turn to a term that Soetomo himself elsewhere employs — *lelakon*, appointed course in life, somewhere between *dharma* and destiny. For the events of 1907-1908 — losing his father and finding Dr Wahidin, leaving his family and finding his *guru* — reflect the passage of a Javanese man's life, from *kesenangan* (pleasure) to *kewajiban* (duty), from *kenakalan* (naughtiness) to *kemuliaan* (excellence), from imitation to setting an example.¹⁰⁵

Nothing could be more striking, in this connection, than the strange link between the enormous, almost physiological surge of emotion, the giddy feeling of immensely expanding horizons that Soetomo records of his meeting with Dr Wahidin, and the picture he gives of the doctor himself. Not only do we get a glimpse of a most traditional if resolute Javanese gentleman,¹⁰⁶ but we are brought back to a unified world where sight, sound and meaning again coincide. 'Calm', 'melodious', 'tranquil' — the expressions Soetomo uses for the sound and sight of Dr Wahidin he had used earlier to describe the village life of Ngepeh, the circle of *zaman kuno*. Then 'not yet Javanese', he had been a disruptive element. Now Javanese, he rejoins his forefathers.

Yet if he has found his *asal* (origins), we are not being treated to the simple story of a Javanese growing up. For the traditional Dr Wahidin brings the young Soetomo 'new ideals and a new world'. What were these new ideals, this new world? The Western science and rationalism of which Van Niel writes? In such matters Soetomo was already far better educated than the old doctor had

¹⁰⁵ Compare the last two portions of Ronggowarsita's *Kala Tida*, entitled *Sabda Tama* and *Sabda Jati*.

¹⁰⁶ In a passage immediately antecedent, Soetomo (p. 80) transmits a story that Wahidin told about himself. In a certain place where he hoped to call a meeting to raise scholarship funds, the Dutch Assistant Resident was antagonistic. Accordingly, the local *priyayi*, who secretly wished to attend, did not dare go. So Wahidin entered the Dutchman's office (here the syntax changes and Soetomo takes over the narration from Wahidin) and stood there quite still — until the Assistant Resident looked at him. Acting as though in awe, he prostrated himself below the Dutchman's table, offering the respectful *sembah* gesture and speaking in the humblest language: 'Tuan Assistant Resident became *sabar* [got control of himself], and at that very moment his face became sweet and smiling. Tuan Assistant Resident said to him: "Doctor, your purpose deserves the strongest support. It would be well if you spoke before a meeting, so that all my officials can hear you". Thus by the aid of Tuan Assistant Resident, who had originally intended to block his purpose [Dr Wahidin] won extraordinary attention'. The gentle irony of this episode, no less than the acceptance of submission to achieve a high aim, is characteristically Javanese.

ever been. With his years in the ELS and the STOVIA, with his excellent command of Dutch, Soetomo was much closer to the 'new world' conceived by Westerners than was his enlightener. I believe rather that Soetomo, and probably others in the STOVIA milieu, sensed in Wahidin an example of how to proceed into the colonial Western world without imitation; at a deeper level, how to imitate one's forebears without imitating them, how not to abandon Javanese tradition when one no longer lived imbedded in it, and how to match the watching self with the *bathin*. Ronggawarsita had imaged the Time of Darkness with the harsh oxymoron of impotent kingly perfection. The *ratu utama*, sign for Glorious Java, was no longer believable. Wahidin, however, showed that it was possible, even essential, to detach adjective from noun. Once detached, the weight of its meaning shifted from what we might call political efficacy to ethical commitment: in a word, to a perfected moral faculty (*budi utama*). And this ethical commitment was a burden which anyone might assume – not excluding Javanese teenagers, especially one whose own name compounded *su* (excellent) with *utama* (perfected).¹⁰⁷

But commitment to what? In the old Javanese tradition, kingly perfection meant commitment to kingly power. Concentrated power produced fertility, prosperity and harmony in the community. Social well-being was a by-product of power's commitment to itself.¹⁰⁸ But once kingly power had proven impotent, the by-product could readily become central goal.

If one looks at the ideas that Soetomo worked with all his life, one finds a vocabulary and an idiom of a very consistent kind. There is, for example, almost no utilization of political notions based in Western sociology.¹⁰⁹ The Marxian categories central to the political language of Sukarno's entire generation, from its conservative to its radical members, are totally absent. Where Sukarno and his contemporaries talked of *Indonesia Merdeka* (Free Indonesia), Soetomo typically spoke of his ideal as *Indonesia Mulia* (Glorious, or Perfected Indonesia). *Merdeka*, liberation, implied, of course, much more radical and political aims. It is a word that is the peculiar glory of Indonesian, or, as I once called it, 'revolutionary Malay',¹¹⁰ but has few resonances in Javanese. *Mulia* is just the reverse. In the passage of 'Memories' quoted above (p. 243) we can see what *mulia* naturally goes with, and it seems the very opposite of *kemerdekaan*: *kewajiban*, or obligation.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Koch, *Batig Slot*, p. 139. The Dutchman writes that 'The struggle for social betterment attracted him [Soetomo] more than politics. He radiated love for his country and his people ...'.

¹⁰⁸ See my 'Idea of Power', pp. 18-19.

¹⁰⁹ See Scherer, pp. 212-13. For a full discussion of Soetomo's political thinking, see also pp. 207-47.

¹¹⁰ See my 'The Languages of Indonesian Politics', *Indonesia*, 1 (1966), pp. 89-116.

As Savitri Scherer has sensitively shown, Soetomo conceived of *Indonesia Mulia* like a *gamelan* orchestra in which each person plays the instrument allotted to him as best he can. From the intertwining of fulfilled musical obligations comes the glory (*kemuliaan*) of the *gamelan* sound.¹¹¹ Playing one's instrument is performing one's *lelakon*, living up to the responsibilities one has inherited or which have fallen to one's lot. Soetomo's idea of uplifting his society was to make it feasible for all the 'instruments' to be played as perfectly as possible. Peasants and workers had to be fed, cared for and educated to become good peasants and good workers, mindful of their obligations and capable of fulfilling them.¹¹² When, in the 1930s – to the disgust of some of his younger nationalist colleagues – Soetomo appealed to the collaborationist aristocracy and *priyayi* for their support, he did so by way of urging them to 'remember their origins', in other words to accept the moral obligations of their tradition.¹¹³

We can perhaps then think of Soetomo's nationalist mission in terms of a musical simile. It involved, as it were, the systematic transposition of old melodies into new keys, different scales and changed orchestrations. 'Memories' offers us some conspicuous examples of this. His uncle meditated in his Javanese home, Soetomo in the Western STOVIA. His grandfather created a system of 'useful justice' in Ngepeh, and Soetomo spent his life in search of a useful justice for the Indonesia being born.¹¹⁴ His father tried to live with dignity in the chains of the

¹¹¹ Compare the overwhelmingly *aural* depiction of the harmony pervading the *sambatan* in Ngepeh (above p. 233).

¹¹² Scherer, pp. 218–39. This association of *gamelan* and politics is not merely an eccentricity of Soetomo's. I have heard from elderly court musicians in Surakarta that there is a special *gamelan* composition called 'Denda Sewu', traditionally played when the ruling dynasty was in grave trouble. The composition itself is not technically difficult, so that if the court's master-musicians could not play it perfectly, this was taken as a confirming omen of impending disaster.

¹¹³ Soetomo said of his party, Parindra, that it 'makes the best effort to woo them [the upper *priyayi*] so that their dedication to the land and the people could be accelerated according to their own *dharma*, that is, the *dharma* of a true *ksatria* according to their aristocratic blood'. Taken from Soetomo's address to Parindra's opening congress, 25 December 1935, entitled 'Bekerja dengan tiada mengenal buahnja', and cited in Scherer, p. 235.

¹¹⁴ Soetomo (p. 20) notes that his grandfather, bitterly disappointed that the boy was not going to enter the native administration, requested that at the very least he keep a horse for riding, as a sign of *priyayi*-dom. 'Quite unexpectedly, there came a time when I could fulfil my grandfather's longing. When as a doctor I had to care for the health of the people in the region of Mt Lawu, I kept two horses which, every day, turn and turn about, bore me to the villagers . . .'. A nice image of transposition: rural doctor as the new *priyayi*. Soetomo also recalls (p. 42) that his father insisted on speaking in high Javanese (*krama*) to almost everyone and in this was among the first to spread 'democratic ways'. Supardi (pp. 36, 38) notes that Soetomo did exactly the same thing, and habitually addressed his driver, Pak Soemo, in *krama*. It is perhaps characteristic, nonetheless, that between *ngoko* (low, familiar Javanese) and *krama*, Soetomo and his father chose to 'abolish' *ngoko* (as it were, levelling up). Nagazumi (p. 193 n. 26) mentions the existence of a movement, not long after the birth of Budi Utomo, called Jawa Dwipa, which advocated the abolition of *krama* (as it were, levelling down). The roughly contemporaneous Saminist movement also resolutely refused to use *krama* to officialdom. See Harry J. Benda and Lance Castles, 'The Samin Movement', *BKI*, 125, ii (1969), p. 234.

colonial bureaucracy, Soetomo did so as an alien-trained doctor. His forefathers, as he described them, saw marriage as a cementing of solidarity in the Javanese world; and Soetomo, in his touching description of his Dutch wife, appears to have seen his own marriage in the same light.¹¹⁵ But the central image of transposition is the organization that Soetomo made history by founding: Budi Utomo. For Budi Utomo is fully recognizable in both Javanese and Indonesian 'tonalities'.¹¹⁶ Situated across the two languages, it looked both forward and back, signifying committed endeavour — a later generation would say struggle¹¹⁷ — to live up to something long there in the memory and imagination.

The images of light, dawn and sun suffusing the publications of the Budi Utomo years are both specific to the course of Javanese and Indonesian history and larger symbols of revival and regeneration.¹¹⁸ They are images conjured up at moments when men's lives appear to run in tandem with the world. When they appear under conditions in which progressive conceptions of time are influential, one would expect them to be linked to images of youth. This is clearly true of the early years of Budi Utomo. How close the nexus between life-moment and linear history was can be judged from the observation of Goenawan Mangoenkoesomo, Soetomo's closest friend, that the aim of the boys in Budi Utomo was to 'remain a motor in order to propel their seniors from behind'.¹¹⁹ The phrase not only

¹¹⁵ 'Here it is only fitting that I express my immeasurable gratitude to her. My wife was someone who truly loved her country. And so she understood and was aware, and constantly urged and prodded me to make my love for my land and people still deeper, and to give that love real expression. My wife was also someone who loved her people. And so she understood my obligation to my people, and constantly urged me to prove my love for my people. My wife stood, not above her people, but amongst them. And so her love was truly alive. As a true Dutchwoman, my wife loved freedom, justice and equality; and so she could not endure a situation full of discrimination, and hated to see behaviour that could stain the good name of her nation. It was because of these feelings that she continually urged me to keep on fighting, to join the struggle to abolish this discrimination.' Soetomo, pp. 127-8.

¹¹⁶ *Budi utama* is perfectly good, if stilted, Indonesian.

¹¹⁷ Compare Sudisman, p. 24: 'We live in order to struggle, and we struggle in order to live. We live not just for the sake of life alone; we live to defend that life with courage till our hearts cease to beat. From the moment that a human being is born, from his first whimper as a baby to his last breath, life is a struggle. Sometimes he will face a struggle that is very difficult, sometimes he will face a hard-fought battle. Not every such contest is crowned with victory. But the aim of life is to have the courage to enter this hard-fought battle and at the same time win the victory. This is the dream of everyone who struggles, not excluding the communists. This too is my dream of life. For without dreams, without ideals, life is barren and empty'.

¹¹⁸ See Taufik Abdullah, 'Modernization in the Minangkabau World', pp. 215-18. He speaks of one of the early modernizers in West Sumatra, Datuk Sutan Maharadja, the 'father of Malay journalism', who from 1891 to 1913 was successively involved in newspapers entitled *Palita Ketjil* [Little Lamp], *Warta Berita* [News Report], *Tjaja Soematera* [Light of Sumatra], *Oetoesan Melajoe* [Malay Messenger], *Al-Moenir* [Enlightenment] and *Soeloeh Melajoe* [Malay Torch]. Compare the splendid discussion of comparable imagery in China during more or less the same period, in M. Meisner, *Li Ta-Chao and the Origins of Chinese Marxism* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard U.P., 1967), especially pp. 21-8.

¹¹⁹ Cited in Nagazumi, p. 42.

employs a distinctly twentieth century industrial metaphor, but, in the Javanese context, sharply reverses the hoary pedagogic apophthegm *tut wuri andayani* – perfection comes when old people guide the young from behind.¹²⁰ It is a mordant, excited expression that belongs to youth.

We find nothing comparable in the 'Memories' of Soetomo. Images of light and dawn are quite rare in it. The tone of the book is sombre and centres on death rather than birth. If we ask ourselves why this should be so, I think the answer is quite straightforward. By 1934, Soetomo, for all his political successes,¹²¹ was no longer in the vanguard of the nationalist movement. As a man of his time, as well as a Javanese, he could see that the movement's progress and the trajectory of his own life were diverging. His wife had returned to the *zaman yang baka* and he was preparing in due course to follow her. It was time to think about bequests (*warisan*), and a *warisan* is really what 'Memories' represents.

Ronggawarsita had lamented that there was 'no example left'. What he meant was that the old models no longer worked, and so could not be handed down. It was Soetomo's (and his generation's) quiet triumph to have reclaimed their ancestry and to have found thereby an example to bequeath to their posterity.

¹²⁰ It became a central theme in the educational philosophy of the Taman Siswa school system created by Soetomo's famous contemporary Ki Hadjar Dewantoro.

¹²¹ For example, Rukun Tani, the peasant organization he formed in East Java, had over 20,000 members in 125 branches in 1933, making it easily the largest rural organization affiliated with the nationalist movement. See J. Ingleson, 'The Secular and Non-Cooperating Nationalist Movement in Indonesia, 1923-1934' (Ph.D. thesis, Monash, 1974), p. 419. On the successful growth of Parindra, see S. Abeyasekere, 'Relations between the Indonesian Cooperating Nationalists and the Dutch, 1935-1942' (Ph.D. thesis, Monash, 1972), pp. 127-31.

YAMIN AND HAMKA

Two Routes to an Indonesian Identity

Deliar Noer

In a new country like Indonesia, a few leaders can play a crucial role in shaping the ideas of the nation. This is as true of its image of the past as of its perspectives for the future. The common people have their own images and perspectives, but in general these have not been effectively expressed at the national level. The role of the masses has tended to lie in filtering, selecting, or amplifying the ideas of a few leaders. Much can be learned by viewing a nation's perspectives through the ideas of one or two leaders.

Yamin and Hamka, with whom this study is concerned, both came from Minangkabau, an area which produced more than its share of modern Indonesian leaders. Both have been considered among Indonesia's great writers and orators. Both occupied important positions during the Dutch period and the Japanese occupation, and both were active in politics during the revolutionary period and subsequently. Both were also interested in the country's history, and not a few of their writings were concerned with history. Despite these similarities, however, they differed widely in their education, their attitude toward religion and their orientation to the past as well as the future of the country.

Muhammad Yamin was born in Talawi, Sawah Lunto, West Sumatra on 23 August 1903.¹ He came from a middle-class family. He belonged to the local nobility, indicated by the position of his uncle who was a *laras* (district head). Yet although a *kemenakan* (nephew) of a *laras* would usually be close to the *adat* (customary law), none of Yamin's writings dealt with the subject.

Yamin spent most of his life in Java, from the time of his studies in the early twenties at various secondary schools and the Jakarta Law School. Probably this changed his attitude toward his 'fatherland'. Originally he considered this 'fatherland' to be Andalas (Sumatra), which he praised in these terms in 1920.² Eight years afterwards, his national sentiments had widened to the whole archipelago, as witnessed his poem *Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku*.³

¹ For Yamin biographical data see Sutrisno Kutojo, 'Professor Hadji Muhammad Yamin S.H.', *Biografi Pahlawan Nasional*, Djilid 2 (Jakarta, Lembaga Sedjarah dan Antropologi, 1972) pp. 327-89. See also *Peranan Pemuda Muhammad Yamin Sekitar Sumpah Pemuda 28 Oktober 1928* (Jakarta, Departemen Penerangan, 1962); 'Menpen Muhammad Yamin wafat', *Mimbar Penerangan*, 13, x (1962).

² See his poem *Tanah Airku*, partly reprinted in A. Teeuw, *Pokok dan Tokoh dalam Kesusasteraan Indonesia Baru* (Jakarta, Pembangunan, 1959 [5th printing]), Vol. 1, p.75; also Z. Usman, *Kesusasteraan Baru Indonesia* (Jakarta, Gunung Agung, 1964) p. 155. See also *Permintaan* as reprinted in Usman, p. 155; Armijn Pane, 'Kesusasteraan Baru IV - Sedikit Sedjarahnja', *Poedjangga Baroe*, 1(1933) p. 117. Yamin appeared to be so attached to his area of origin that he asked to be buried in his village after his death. He was buried in Talawi in 1962.

³Published in 1928, n.p.

In his younger days Yamin was well known for his literary output in Malay, which became the basis of the Indonesian language. For him this had always been the national language. Even while still at secondary school he urged his friends and other Dutch-educated Indonesians, among whom the Dutch language was often used as the medium of communication, to abandon this in favour of their own language, Malay. In 1920 he warned his colleagues that 'we have not been able to . . . express our feelings in our language', that 'our language has become more and more abandoned' and that 'there are those who are not concerned any more with it'.⁴ Adding that this attitude was a 'reflection of having gone astray', that it was 'wrong' and constituted a 'sin', Yamin invoked the proverb *tiada bahasa, hilanglah bangsa* (without a language, the nation is lost) to support his arguments.⁵ Looking into the future Yamin imagined the gratitude among the great-great grand-children of his generation for the work of their ancestors if they could develop this language. Literary works of a high standard would, he argued, make the nation well-known and raise it to glory.⁶

Yamin wrote with great enthusiasm in 1922 about the Malay history, *Sejarah Melayu*, of Tun Seri Lanang, Bendahara Paduka Raja. He stated that the book was one of the great historical books in the East, 'occupying the same position as the *Pararaton* and *Nagarakertagama*', although conceding that the two latter books were 'in several aspects of a higher standard and older'.⁷ He praised the author highly for his writing as well as for his statesmanship, and urged others to follow the steps of Tun Seri Lanang in developing the country's literature.⁸ Perhaps he was then also proud to discover that Tun Seri Lanang's origin was the Minangkabau.

Yamin had made his own contribution to the development of Indonesian poetry. He had been considered a pioneer of modern Indonesian literature.⁹

⁴ M. Jamin, 'Soeara Semangat', *Jong Sumatra*, 3, ii and iii (1920) p. 58. The change of the spelling of Yamin's name (from Jamin to Yamin) was probably made in the early 1930s. In *Poedjangga Baroe*, 2 (1934-35) his name was already spelled Yamin, in 1928 it was still Jamin.

⁵ *Tiada bahasa hilanglah bangsa* can also mean: without proper behaviour, one's nobleness is lost. *Bangsa* in this sense means a group of people of noble character or behaviour.

⁶ Jamin, 'Soeara', p. 59.

⁷ M. Jamin, 'Tun Seri Lanang, Pudjangga Melaju', *Jong Sumatranen Bond 1917-1922 Gedenknummer*, p. 50.

⁸ Jamin, 'Tun Seri Lanang', p. 57.

⁹ H.B. Jassin, *Pudjangga Baru Prosa dan Puisi* (Jakarta, Gunung Agung, 1963), p. 345. Yet Yamin seemed to remain aloof toward *Poedjangga Baroe*, the Indonesian literary journal of 1933-42. Only two of his writings were published in this journal, i.e. 'Ken Arok dan Ken Dedes', *Poedjangga Baroe*, I, vii (1934) and 'Perguruan Tinggi Indonesia', *Poedjangga Baroe*, 2 (1934-35) pp. 10-20. His poem *Sedih* was also published in *Poedjangga Baroe*, 2, iii (1934) but this was a reprint from *Pemuda Sumatera*; see also Jassin, *Poedjangga Baroe*, p. 351.

Like Yamin, Hamka also made Malay (Indonesian) his medium of expression. Like Yamin, Hamka also wrote poems, though it was his novels which brought him to fame. All of Hamka's writings are imbued with an Islamic spirit. With a few exceptions when he seemed to be led astray by ambition, as during the Japanese period, he was anxious to prove that the basis for his activities was Islam.¹⁰

Hamka's use of the Malay language was a natural development, not requiring justification. Called Abdul Malik in his childhood, he was born on 16 February 1908 in Maninjau, West Sumatra, where the medium of communication was Minangkabau, a dialect of Malay. When written in Jawi (i.e. Malay in Arabic character) – the script commonly used during Hamka's childhood – the Minangkabau dialect does not differ from Malay. Malay was also the lingua franca of the areas in which Hamka lived during his younger days (in addition to the Minangkabau, also South Sulawesi and North Sumatra).

Hamka did not enjoy a higher education, whether secular or religious. He only attended the village school for three years and religious schools in Padang Panjang and Parabek, near Bukittinggi, for about the same length of time. However, he seemed to have a gift for languages and soon mastered Arabic, which enabled him to read widely, including translations of western writings. He came from five generations of *ulama* whose only foreign language was Arabic, although Hamka himself enjoyed a respected position among the alternative *adat* elite as a *datuk, penghulu*. Hamka's talent for writing was perhaps also inherited from his father, Hadji Abdul Karim Amrullah, one of the founders of the modernist Muslim movement in Indonesia, who like other traditional *ulama* in Indonesia wrote poems and religious tracts in Malay as well as in Arabic.

Hamka felt no need, as Yamin did, to urge his contemporaries to make use of Malay or Indonesian in every-day speech and in writing. For Hamka the oath which the Youth Congress took in 1928, recognizing Indonesian as the national language, constituted a formulation of what had already become a fact; there was no other choice – only Malay could become the national language.

For the Dutch-educated the issue was more complicated, and Yamin developed an elaborate case for the recognition of the national language. He developed the theme, especially in his keynote address to the 1928 Youth Congress,¹¹ that language had an important influence on national unity. He admitted that Swiss unity had not required a common language, but with the 'hundreds of languages' in the Archipelago such a language was essential. Malay had already raised itself to the position of a national language – *Bahasa Indonesia*. Yamin argued that the Indonesian language already constituted one of the expressions of the unity of the Indonesian nation. Confidently he depicted it as a storehouse for a new civilization of the future, the Indonesian civilization.

¹⁰ Hamka, *Kenang-Kenangan Hidup* (Jakarta, 1974-75) Vol. III, p. 184; Vol. IV, pp. 13, 292.

¹¹ Yamin's speech to the 1928 Youth Congress in Jakarta was entitled 'Persatuan dan Kebangsaan Indonesia' and published in *Persatoean Indonesia*, 1, viii (1928).

At this time Yamin appears to have resolved his ambivalence towards nationhood. The earlier Sumatran patriotism reflected in his poem *Tanah Airku* was now consumed in the wider Indonesian loyalty also suggested in some early writings.¹² In 1928 he wrote his *Indonesia, Tumpah Darahku!*, became secretary of the second Indonesian Youth Congress which took the famous youth oath of 1928, and played a decisive role in drafting its decision. From that time on he spoke about Indonesia as his nation, his fatherland and his language. He seemed also to lose interest in Malay and the Minangkabau, and never subsequently wrote about them, although as a member of the Volksraad in 1938-40, representing the Minangkabau, he was obliged to take an interest in its affairs. In contrast to Hamka, his writings showed traces of influences from Javanese literature.

Yamin also expressed his Indonesian national sentiments in the form of a play, *Ken Arok dan Ken Dedes*, written on the occasion of the second Youth Congress in 1928.¹³ The play depicted Ken Arok's success in uniting the thirteenth century kingdoms of Janggala and Kediri into one state, thereby paving the way for a mightier Majapahit. The drama, successful enough to be shown thirty-nine times by 1950, praised Ken Arok for the success of this unification, seemingly unworried by the infamous means used to bring it about. Yamin also emphasized Ken Arok's lowly origin. Whether this was early evidence of his sympathetic attitude toward the *murba*, the common people, later shown during the revolution in his close relationship with Tan Malaka, cannot be stated with certainty. More important to Yamin was unity throughout the Archipelago, irrespective of the ways utilized to achieve it. He measured every Indonesian historical figure by this yardstick, hailing Gajah Mada, *patih* of Majapahit, as the ablest unifier of Nusantara, and Dipanagara as not only a hero fighting Dutch colonial ambition but also a potential unifier of Indonesia.¹⁴

Most of Yamin's work on Gajah Mada and Dipanagara was done during the Japanese occupation, but his concern with past heroes began much earlier, as can be seen by his play on Ken Arok and Ken Dedes. As will be explained below, Yamin already mentioned these heroes in his 1928 address. The Japanese occupation may have given him more opportunity to write than when active in the thirties as a political party leader (Gerindo and afterwards Parnindo), Volksraad member and lawyer. The ban on Dutch historical books under the Japanese created further need and opportunity for Yamin's historical talents.

Yamin's emphasis on Indonesia's past and future unity was especially apparent in his speech at the 1928 Youth Congress. It could be said that all his later writings, including those published after independence, were a justification for his 1928 stand, although with an increasingly Javanese influence. The speech constituted the main address at the congress.

¹² For example, 'Tun Seri Lanang', p. 57. 'Our literature will eventually glitter as a decoration of the most beautiful Indonesia'.

¹³ Teeuw, p. 80.

¹⁴ M. Yamin, *Gajah Mada: Pahlawan Persatuan Nusantara* (Jakarta, 1953); *idem*, *Sedjarah Peperangan Dipanegara* (Jakarta, 1950).

Yamin argued that 'Indonesian unity was no nonsense, but [was] like a house built on strong piles'. This unity was based on several factors, including history, language and *adat* law. Yamin viewed the history of Indonesia in general as 'one single development', from the status of independence before the arrival of the Western peoples, to the status of colonialism and back to independence again. He dismissed the history of the various islands and ethnic groups of the Indonesian archipelago: 'When we view thoroughly and deeply, we can only speak of Indonesian history, (there is) no separate history of Java, Sumatra, Borneo or Celebes'.¹⁵

Referring to Ernest Renan's theory on nationhood, Yamin was of the opinion that the 'unity of history' indeed exercised an influence on the building of a nation. A nation was 'more like a spirit than a body'. The first aspect of this spirit could be traced in the past, constituting reminiscences, while the second aspect was connected with the present. The problem then was whether a group of people called 'nation' wanted to live together and to continue to live together as one nation. For Indonesia, Yamin continued, the past was characterized by heroism, glory and high culture. But the past, too, was full of sadness and sacrifice due to colonialism. Yet, according to Yamin, this had cemented the nation, and had also alleviated the weaknesses present during the Sriwijaya and Majapahit periods. Unity in the period of the two Indonesian kingdoms was based, he said, on *keprabuan* (from *prabu* meaning king, lord), the existing system of dynasties, in whose claim to loyalty religious considerations also played a role. Unity in the modern period was characterized not only by common unifying factors, such as language, *adat* and history, but especially by the will of the people to live as one nation.¹⁶

Hamka was also imbued with a sense of Indonesia's unity long before 1928. He was certainly less attached to his ethnic origin in the sense that he was able to appreciate people of other ethnic groups, especially when they were fellow Muslims. In this respect Hamka was a Muslim first and an Indonesian second. Indeed for many Indonesian Muslims in the second and third decades of this century attachment to the Muslim community (*ummat Muhammad*) was felt more intensely than to Indonesia as a nation. This attachment to Islam was especially strongly felt among Malay speaking peoples. A Muslim convert in the Malay speaking world, even in Ambon, was considered to 'become Malay' (*masuk Melayu*). But for Hamka this did not mean an unawareness of Indonesian nationhood. On the contrary, even before maturity he was well aware of

¹⁵ Yamin, 'Persatuan'. Yamin stressed this view again in 1957 when he addressed the first national history seminar in Yogyakarta.

¹⁶ Ernest Renan's theory on nationhood has influenced many of Indonesia's Western-educated leaders. See for example Sukarno's speech on *Panca Sila* in M. Yamin, *Naskah Persiapan Undang-Undang Dasar 1945* (Jakarta, Penerbit Siguntang, 1971) Vol. I, p. 69. See also Sunario, *Dasar² Kesatuan Kebangsaan Indonesia* (Jakarta, Tintamas, 1949); *idem*, *Apakah Bangsa Itu?* (Jakarta, Tintamas, n.d.).

nationalism, although with an Islamic tint. At the age of seventeen he had associated with Muhammadiyah and Sarekat Islam. He joined the cadre courses of these two organizations in Yogyakarta and Pekalongan in 1924. Hamka's attachment to Islam had broadened his otherwise limited regional attachment. The introduction of Islam to Indonesia had long since added a new relationship of Muslim brotherhood to existing ethnic or regional feelings. An Islamic scholar, since time immemorial, could move easily from one Muslim community to another without experiencing any discrimination.

How did Hamka come to recognize the importance of nationalism? Pan-Islam as a political idea was on the wane from the third decade of this century. This implied no weakening of the sense of belonging to a united religious community, as exemplified by the high numbers making the *haj* (pilgrimage) to Mecca. Hamka had already become acquainted with the rise of nationalism in Egypt as well as in Turkey. Mustafa Kamil, the champion of nationalism in Egypt, was already well read in modernist schools in the Minangkabau region during the second decade of this century. While Mustafa Kemal's plan in Turkey for the secularization of society and state was not welcomed by many Muslims in Indonesia, his struggle to keep the western powers from Turkish soil had been much appreciated. In a colonial environment it was always easy to arouse nationalist feelings, especially when the colonial power was Christian. In accepting the compatibility of nationalism with Islam, Hamka appears to have been influenced by Haji Agus Salim, whom he had always respected, and by leaders of the Persatuan Muslim Indonesia (Indonesian Muslim Union), a political party which flourished in the Minangkabau about 1930, and with which he was closely associated. Nationalism, according to this school, should be imbued with humanism and upheld in the cause of Allah and thereby be prevented from falling into chauvinism. Every time the question of nationalism arose at that time, it was customary to produce a *Hadith* (Tradition of the Prophet Muhammad) to the effect that 'love for one's country is part of *iman* (faith)'. Although this *Hadith* is *dha'if* (weak) many Muslims gave it a degree of credence.

By 1930 Hamka had not only travelled to Java, but also to Mecca, South Sulawesi and North Sumatra. In South Sulawesi he spent about four years as a *muballigh* (propagandist) of Muhammadiyah, and this experience certainly enhanced his sense of solidarity with people from other parts of Indonesia. When Hamka finally settled in Medan in 1936 as chief editor of the weekly *Pedoman Masyarakat* he reached a point of no return from nationalism. It was his career which forced him to regard Indonesia as one. Medan, and the surrounding Deli area, was dominated by no single ethnic group; a sense of solidarity as one nation had been nurtured there, even if many of the local royal families did not share it.

By the year 1930 nationalism had become the subject of debate between Islamic and religiously neutral nationalists.¹⁷ Although in general both were in favour of it, they could not agree. One Islamic group, Persatuan Islam of Bandung, denounced secular nationalism as similar to *ashabiyah*, the narrow-minded chauvinism of the various Arab clans before the introduction of Islam by the Prophet Muhammad. Hamka was in agreement with some of the ideas of Persatuan Islam, but he could also understand the position of the religiously neutral nationalists. He therefore championed the compatibility of Islam and nationalism, which part of the Bandung group rejected.¹⁸ This was a period when Hamka began to make a study of Indonesian history from the Islamic point of view. He did recognize the importance of the history of pre-Islamic Indonesia, but that era had, he believed, given way to one in which Islam moulded and shaped the attitudes, feelings and thoughts of the majority of the people. It was this role of Islam which distinguished his perspective of the past from that of Yamin.

Not that Yamin rejected completely the role of Islam. He also extolled various Islamic kingdoms, especially Melaka. But his writings dealt rather with the Hindu-Buddhist kingdoms and their heroes, and even with earlier ages. The work he published after independence was even more forceful than his 1928 speech. Again and again he insisted that Indonesia's unity was not of recent origin, that it could be traced back 'six thousands years' when, he said, red and white — the colours of the Indonesian flag — were already recognized symbols derived from religious and later *adat*, consideration. Red, he said, was the colour of blood, indicating courage and dynamism. White was the colour of the sap of plants, the symbol of truth and passivity.¹⁹

Hamka did not share Yamin's opinion about the role of Hindu kingdoms and the red and white flag. For Hamka Indonesia's unity was a relatively modern phenomenon. Nevertheless the struggle for independence in the twentieth century had been preceded by Islamic leaders subsequently accepted as national heroes, such as Dipanagara, Imam Bonjol, Teungku Cik di Tiro, Antasari, Hasanuddin, Iskandar Muda, Untung Surapati and Trunajaya. Even the Christian Pattimura of Maluku, who fought fiercely against the Dutch, was according to Hamka inspired by his Muslim teacher, Said, whom the Dutch hanged alongside him.²⁰

¹⁷ D. Noer, *The Modernist Muslim Movement in Indonesia, 1900-1942* (London/Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1973) p. 249 ff.

¹⁸ Hamka, *Kenang-Kenangan*, Vol. II, p. 200.

¹⁹ M. Yamin, *6000 Tahun Sang Merah Putih* (Jakarta, 1951).

²⁰ *Tentang Dasar Negara Republik Indonesia dalam Konstituante* (n.p., n.d.) Vol. III, p. 59. This is an official document about debates on the basis of the state at the Constituent Assembly in Bandung 1955-59.

Unlike Yamin, Hamka never glorified the Hindu kingdoms. Hamka rejected as pure chauvinism the claim that the red and white flag originated 6000 years ago.²¹ He also rejected the idea that the expansion of Majapahit to the various regions outside East and Central Java was warmly welcomed by the inhabitants. He even accused Gajah Mada, *patih* of Majapahit, of having 'cruelly . . . subjected areas in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Sulawesi and Nusa Tenggara by conquering the existing Islamic kingdoms'.²² He likened Gajah Mada to Bismarck of Germany, ruthlessly carrying out his unification policy without regard to humanitarian feelings. Hamka stated that many areas of Indonesia would have reason to object if the spirit of Majapahit and Gajah Mada was maintained at the present time, however slightly. He recalled that a Hindu king of the declining Majapahit, Prabu Udara, in the sixteenth century invited the Portuguese in Melaka to protect him against the Islamic kingdom of Demak. Hamka remarked that if the Hindu king was more afraid of his Muslim countrymen than of the alien Christians, this indicated the absence of nationalism at that time.²³

Hamka admitted the continued influence of Hindu and Buddhist ideas in Indonesia, but stressed that Hinduism was nowadays embraced by only 'about two million out of 105 million' inhabitants.²⁴ Even the 350 years of Dutch colonialism, he said, were only able to 'gain not more than 5 million Christians'.²⁵ Hamka's rejection of the Hindu-Buddhist role in creating Indonesian unity was echoed in his assessment of the development of the modern Indonesian language. Unlike Yamin, and not a few other Indonesian scholars influenced by Javanese literature, Hamka opposed the incorporation of an excessive number of Sanskrit words into contemporary Indonesian.²⁶ He regarded this as an expression of a 'hidden grudge' on the part of some Javanese, because Malay and not Javanese was made the basis of the national language.²⁷ He even asked himself whether 'there is not a hidden well-arranged plan to "Javanize" the Indonesian language'.²⁸

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 75.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 69.

²³ Hamka, *Sejarah Ummat Islam* (Kuala Lumpur, 1965) p. 492.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 431.

²⁵ *Ibid.* Indonesia's total population in 1971 was 118,367,850. This included 103,579,496 Muslims, 5,151,994 Protestants, 2,692,215 Catholics, 897,497 'other Christians', 2,296,299 Hindus, 1,092,314 Buddhists, 972,133 Confucianists and 1,685,902 adherents of other religions. Source: Biro Pusat Statistik (Central Bureau of Statistics), Jakarta.

²⁶ Hamka, *Kenang-Kenangan*, Vol. II, pp. 176, 177; *idem*, *Sejarah*, p. 431.

²⁷ Hamka, *Kenang-Kenangan*, Vol. II, p. 177.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 105.

Hamka's writings are understandably relatively free from this influence of Sanskrit or Javanese. He considered that in 1928 when the youth officially recognized *Bahasa Indonesia* as the national language, they were giving a new name to the existing language, Malay.²⁹ Hamka's 'pure' Malay has indeed been recognized by Malay-speaking people not only in Indonesia but also in Malaysia, as witness the spread of almost all his writings in that part of the world.³⁰

Hamka, who did not hide his feelings in his writing, could appreciate regional characteristics in discussing the unity of the Indonesian nation. He even considered that since the whole was made up of the parts, the unity of the nation as a whole depended on the regions. Following the Indonesian educator Ki Hadjar Dewantara, Hamka considered that Indonesian culture was made up of the 'peaks of the cultures of the various regions', whatever this might mean. Hamka never considered Javanese culture 'higher' than that of other regions. All had their own characteristics, equal in worth. He seemed proud of his Minangkabau origin, and in his younger days held that only the Minangkabau had *adat*, as if other ethnic groups were 'uncivilized'.³¹ Although age moderated this regional pride, he could not forget the important role played by the Minangkabau people in spreading Islam to various parts of the archipelago, including Brunei and the Philippines.³² In 1970, at a seminar on Minangkabau history and culture, Hamka could not resist the temptation to express this pride once again by proclaiming the symbolic truth of the legend that the 'ancestors of the Minangkabau came from the peak of Mount Merapi'.

Yamin maintained that the Indonesian nation was new only politically, while culturally it had always been in existence. This *bangsa-budaya* (folk, cultural nation) had in the modern period been transformed into a *bangsa-negara* (political nation). It was on this basis that Yamin from the outset considered Irian Barat (now Irian Jaya) to be part of Indonesia. In 1945 Yamin indeed proposed that all the areas of present Malaysia and the Malay province of Patani in Thailand, as well as Portuguese Timor, be included in the future state of Indonesia.³³

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

³⁰ One prominent Malay, who in 1947 became *wali negara* (head) of Negara Sumatra Timur – a Dutch puppet state – consented to the use of the word Indonesia rather than Malay in the name of *Lembaga Bahasa Indonesia* (Institute of the Indonesian Language) at the time of its establishment in Medan in the beginning of the Japanese occupation, on the understanding that the language referred to was similar to that used by Hamka. See Hamka, *Kenang-Kenangan*, Vol. II, p. 112.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

³² Hamka, *Adat Minangkabau Menghadapi Revolusi* (Jakarta, 1963) pp. 66, 69.

³³ Yamin, *Naskah*, Vol. 1, pp. 89-91, 126-41. It is interesting to note that in response to Yamin's viewpoint, Mohammad Hatta called it 'somewhat imperialistic' and that therefore one should be cautious about it. For Hatta's view, see Yamin, *Naskah*, pp. 201-4.

Yamin's admiration for the pre-Muslim kingdoms appeared to lead him into inconsistencies. He was enthusiastic about the structure and organization of Sriwijaya and Majapahit,³⁴ seeing in them the highest political and cultural achievement of Indonesians in the past. This caused some Sumatrans to accuse him of having become more Javanese than Indonesian. The writer suspects that Yamin was in this case more motivated by emotion than by rational considerations. Discovering the available sources, he was carried away by the greatness of the Majapahit empire, which he hoped to see reborn in the future Republic of Indonesia. His only reservation about Gajah Mada's attempt to unite the Malay world was the devious and forceful means he used in the subjugation of Sunda and Bali.³⁵ While also praising the Malay and Aceh kingdoms, and various local heroes, he gave more attention to the development of Java, especially Majapahit.

In spite of his enthusiasm for the early kingdoms, Yamin was against feudalism. He favoured democracy, and admired the American and French revolutions, not only for their revolutionary character but also because he considered them to be expressions of human and individual rights. It should be remembered that in 1945 Yamin was one of only two members of the Preparatory Committee for Indonesia's Independence (the other was Mohammad Hatta), who felt the need for the incorporation of human rights in the draft constitution.³⁶ Yet in this respect too, Yamin was not consistent. His praise for state loyalty, as exemplified by Prapanca, the court poet of Majapahit and Gajah Mada, its *patih*, could easily be interpreted as a preference for the rights of the state at the expense of the individual. His discussion of the concept of national history in the 1957 History Seminar also suggested a disregard for human rights. Yamin then argued that the needs of nation-building required that Indonesian history be based on nationalism, with the struggle for independence reflected throughout historical writing.

Within this framework Yamin divided the historical development of Indonesia into five periods: (1) pre-history, from the 'beginning of Indonesian man' to the first century; (2) from the first to the sixth century when written materials were first found; (3) the 'national era', i.e. the periods of Sriwijaya and Majapahit, from the seventh century to 1525; (4) the 'era of the international state' when Indonesians came into contact with Western people — this era terminated at the end of the nineteenth century, and (5) the 'century of the proclamation', starting from the beginning of this century.³⁷

³⁴ M. Yamin, *Tatanegara Madjapahit* (Jakarta, 1962).

³⁵ *Gajah Mada*, pp. 38, 56-8.

³⁶ Yamin, *Naskah*, Vol. I, p. 330. Hatta's view is found on pp. 299-300. Yamin's support for human rights was abundantly expressed in his *Sapta Darma* (Jakarta, 1957), *Revolusi Amerika* (Jakarta, Penerbit Djambatan, 1951) and *Proklamasi dan Konstitusi Republik Indonesia* (Jakarta, Penerbit Djambatan, 1951).

³⁷ 'Tjatur-Sila Chalduniah' in *Seminar Sedjarah Atjara I dan II: Konsepsi Filsafat Sedjarah Nasional dan Periodisasi Sedjarah Indonesia* (Yogyakarta, 1961) p. 25. Yamin's paper was supplied to the writer by Abdurrahman Surjomihardjo for which he is thankful.

Yamin certainly neglected regional history in proposing the above five periods. He even considered that those who had sided with the Dutch during the independence struggle or who did not have the conviction of Indonesian victory in the revolution should abstain from writing Indonesian history.

Expressing these opinions at a time when Sukarno had begun to introduce his 'Guided Democracy' idea, which found a favourable response in Yamin as events in the subsequent years showed, it seemed that Yamin was flirting with power. It was easy to characterize him as a government writer, with a similar role to the court writers of past kingdoms. If he did not worship the ruler as they did, Yamin did at least sing Sukarno's praises in the late fifties and early sixties, including the President's ideas on the *Panca Sila*, 'Guided Democracy', and the role of functional groups, which Yamin called the 'doctrine of Indonesia'.³⁸ Yamin seemed to have abandoned his own ideas about democracy and human rights as well as the proposal on the basis of the state which he formulated in 1945, a few days before Sukarno announced *Panca Sila*.³⁹ Yamin seems to have been a very unbalanced personality politically.

Hamka made ample use of the writings of other historians, whether classical texts such as *hikayat*, court chronicles and the writings of *ulama*, or the work of the Dutch. While Yamin with his Dutch education was entranced by the court writers, it was Hamka who complained that their work was much mixed with legends, making it necessary to distinguish facts from fairy tales. Even *ulama* who wrote history, 'had not been able to free themselves from the influence of these tales'.⁴⁰ Hamka frankly praised the work of Dutch writers and historians. They had contributed a great amount of data, and made a thorough study of the Islamic kingdoms and the spread of Islam. Nevertheless there were two important reasons for approaching their work with caution. First, Hamka suspected that some history had been written in the interest of colonialism. In general Dutch writers argued the superiority of the Dutch over the Muslim kingdoms, not merely in power and arms but also in ethics and morale. The Muslims were always blamed for their 'wrongs' while the Dutch (or the British in Malaya) were praised for being 'right'. In this respect he echoed Yamin's speech to the 1928 Youth Congress, complaining that Indonesian

³⁸ Yamin, *Naskah* (Jakarta, n.p., 1960) Vol. III, p. 646. This idea was presented in Yamin's paper to a Seminar on *Panca Sila* in Yogyakarta, 16-20 February 1959.

³⁹ On 28 May 1945, in a speech to the Investigating Committee for Indonesia's Independence, Yamin elaborated on the basis of the future state of Indonesia. He said the Indonesian state should be based on nationalism, humanitarianism, belief in God, democracy and social justice, which except for the order, were indeed the same principles expounded by Sukarno on 1 June 1945. See Yamin, *Naskah*, Vol. 1, pp. 87-107. In 1966 and 1967 when people in Indonesia began to question Sukarno, Yamin's 1945 speech caused doubts as to whether *Panca Sila* was Sukarno's original idea. Indeed, in his speech of 1 June 1945, Sukarno referred to a 'friend' who, as an expert in language and literature, suggested the name *Panca Sila* for the five principles. It is very likely that this 'friend' was Muhammad Yamin. See Yamin, *Naskah*, Vol. I, p. 78.

⁴⁰ Hamka, *Sejarah*, Introduction to Vol. IV.

students in Dutch schools had to remember Dutch warriors (like Coen and Speelman) as heroes, while the Indonesian warriors who fought against Dutch colonialism were called rebels or pirates. Yamin urged his audience to recognize that the real situation was the opposite.

The second motivation of Dutch writings was religious, Hamka argued, since not a few of the Dutch writers were missionaries or influenced by a Christian missionary zeal. These people aimed to belittle the role of Islam in Indonesia and to diminish Islamic influence among its adherents. Hamka believed that it was difficult to detect the hidden intention of Dutch Christian scholars if one was 'not imbued with an Islamic way of life'.⁴¹ According to Hamka there were two methods of writing history in Islamic circles. First, there was the method used originally by *Hadith*, collectors who gathered facts (about the life of the Prophet Muhammad) from any source, irrespective of whether it was acceptable to reason or not. What was important was the moral quality of the narrators: whether they had ever lied or cheated. The second method was to collect all the data, analyse it and give one's opinion. This was the method followed by Ibn Khaldun, Hamka said, and this was what Hamka attempted to do in his writings.⁴² Hamka seemed to welcome the contribution of every Indonesian to the writing of Indonesian history and to the well-being of his country.⁴³

Unlike Yamin, Hamka was not very enthusiastic about *Panca Sila* as the basis of the state. While appreciating the effort of Sukarno and Yamin in formulating the five principles, he did not consider that the Indonesian way of life was fully reflected in them. Hamka was convinced (perhaps influenced by the doctrine that Islam is a religion of *fitrah*, i.e. in line with man's nature) that Islam was the 'original principle' in Indonesia, the 'true identity' of Indonesians. He added that '*Panca Sila* did not have a historical basis in Indonesia';⁴⁴ it was not understood by the common people who knew and understood Islam better. He also refuted the idea that the proclamation of Indonesia as an independent state was based on *Panca Sila*, which at that time had been known to only a few people. According to Hamka the proclamation was based on the spirit of

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Hamka, *Antara Fakta dan Khayal* (Jakarta, 1975) p. 99.

⁴³ Hamka seemed inclined to forget the co-operation of some people with the Dutch during the revolution and to bear no grudge toward them. The Prophet Muhammad had indeed given an example of how one had to act toward one's former enemies. When he conquered Mecca in 632 after ten years' exile in Madinah, he pardoned all the Mecca people who had previously inflicted every kind of trouble and torture on the Muslims.

⁴⁴ *Tentang Dasar Negara*, Vol. III, p. 61. Hamka's current acceptance of *Panca Sila* does not necessarily run counter to the above statement. Nowadays every organization and citizen of Indonesia is obliged by the government to recognize *Panca Sila* not only as the basis of the state, but also as the basis of actions of all Indonesian organizations and individuals. Since there has not been any official interpretation of *Panca Sila*, however, organizations and leaders tend to interpret it in their own way.

independence as reflected in the revolutionary slogan: 'Freedom or Death!' This slogan was in turn based on Islam, he argued, for at the time of the revolution almost everybody, including religiously neutral people, accompanied it with the cry of *Allah Akbar* (God is the Greatest).

Hamka was nevertheless concerned that non-Muslims should not be discriminated against, for Islam instructed its adherents to co-operate with other religious groups to ensure that 'cloisters, churches, synagogues and mosques be not destroyed'.⁴⁵ Hamka also reminded his readers that 'there is no compulsion in religion'.⁴⁶ He viewed the Indonesian people as made up of diverse elements, religiously as well as ethnically; within this framework he fully agreed with *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity).⁴⁷

Review

We have examined the perspective of two Indonesian leaders, Yamin and Hamka, on the historical identity of the Indonesian people. They both recognized the existence of the Indonesians as one people and one nation. The presence of a lingua franca, Malay, elevated to the position of the national language, *Bahasa Indonesia*, was considered by Yamin and Hamka as an expression of this identity. Both contributed towards the development of the national language by expressing themselves in that language in various literary forms. Yamin, especially in his later years, was more and more inspired by Javanese literature and the Hindu kingdoms of the past, while Hamka continued the tradition of the *ulama*, expressing his opinions on a religious basis. In their separate ways both Yamin and Hamka made their influence felt in the development of the national language.

Yamin was able to convince his contemporaries that Indonesian unity had a basis in history and culture. He especially directed his appeal to Dutch-educated youth. Hamka's audience was at first limited to the Islamic oriented part of the population, but he was able to enlarge it to include the Western-educated. He was able to communicate the view that Indonesia's unity could be built without diminishing dedication to Islam. It should be noted, however, that he was not the first to advance such a view, for he had been preceded by people like H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto and Haji Agus Salim of Sarekat Islam, whom he regarded as his teachers.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 72, 73; Qur'an 22: 40.

⁴⁶ Qur'an 2: 256.

⁴⁷ Hamka is now chairman of the semi-governmental Majelis Ulama (Council of Ulama) of Indonesia as well as general director of the Muslim fortnightly *Panji Masyarakat*. He is also *imam* of the Al-Azhar mosque in Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta. A few foreign countries have shown appreciation of his achievements: Al-Azhar university in Cairo granted him a honorary doctor's degree in 1958, as did the National University of Malaysia in 1974.

Both writers often expressed their opinions emotionally, each from his own resources. Hamka attempted to use Islam as the basis of all his writings and actions. He viewed Indonesia's history through the prism of Islam, the teachings of which, he considered, had moulded the attitude and character of the majority of the Indonesian people. Yamin, arguing for the remote origin of Indonesia's unity, laid more stress on the achievements of the Hinduized kingdoms, especially Majapahit which he glorified. This did not imply an antipathy to Islam, so much as a lack of emphasis on it. He was also concerned with the present and the future, for which he believed democracy and human rights were more appropriate than the values of the past. However, political considerations caused him to leave aside these ideas, and to devote the last few years of his life to elaborating *Panca Sila*, 'Guided Democracy', and the role of functional groups as the 'doctrines of Indonesia'.

The two roads which Yamin and Hamka followed in seeking the identity of Indonesia eventually merged symbolically in the presence of Hamka at Yamin's death-bed in 1962, at the request of Yamin's family. Hamka prayed to Allah for His mercy on Yamin. The relationship between the two personalities had indeed been cordial, each respecting the other in spite of their differences. This final meeting symbolically reflected their mutual recognition of Indonesia's identity: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika!*

NEW NATIONALISMS

The task of twentieth century nationalist historians was analogous to that of Le Van Huu. Like him they had to refashion a powerful foreign intellectual orthodoxy to fit their own autonomous historical identity. The foreign pressure was now in the form of Western colonialism, which had created new political boundaries in the Archipelago, and eventually a new colonial history. For colonial writers in the Philippines, Indonesia, and to a lesser extent Malaya, the dominant theme was the rise and fulfilment of the colonial 'state' to its modern limits, bringing 'modernization' to a traditional and fragmented world. They supported their writing by laying claim to a new 'scientific' legitimacy, banishing older Southeast Asian memories to a museum of legend.

It was in reaction to such a picture that nationalists struggled to build a national past compatible with both colonial boundaries and 'scientific' scholarship. In Indonesia and the Philippines it proved possible to re-assert the grandeur of the pre-colonial past using the findings of the colonial historians themselves. In Malaya the distance was less daunting between traditional court writing and the new national perception, and some interaction between the two has continued to the present.

THE 'PROPAGANDISTS' RECONSTRUCTION OF THE PHILIPPINE PAST

John N. Schumacher, S.J.

The Filipinos had no written history before the Spanish contact, nor is there evidence of any indigenous account of their past apart from the legends in the orally transmitted epics which survived long enough to be recorded. There was indeed a system of writing, and more than one early Spanish missionary commented on the almost universal literacy among the sixteenth century lowland Filipinos. But usage of the syllabary seems to have been confined to such practical and ephemeral uses as letters and the noting down of debts. Hence the only written accounts of the Philippine past before the nineteenth century are those emanating from Spanish sources.

Though few of the Spanish conquistadores or colonial officials set their hand to historical writing, there was a vigorous tradition of chronicles among the five religious orders which undertook the Christianization of the Philippines. By the early seventeenth century, the first chronicles had already appeared, Chirino¹ for the Jesuits, and Ribadeneyra² for the Franciscans. The other orders soon followed suit, and a series of such chronicles continued to appear throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. By definition these had as their primary focus the activities of the missionaries themselves, into which the Filipinos entered chiefly as those among whom, and for whose benefit, these activities were carried on. At their worst they degenerated into hagiographical catalogues, but among the better ones a few, such as Chirino, wrote extensively of the Filipinos themselves, and devoted considerable attention to pre-Hispanic Filipino society in a period when it was still possible to have first-hand knowledge of that society. Though not precisely a chronicler, the Franciscan Fray Juan de Plasencia also wrote down in the 1580s careful descriptions of Tagalog and Pampangan customs and laws, which were long accepted as normative by the colonial government and are informative on pre-Hispanic society in these regions.

¹ P. Chirino, *Relacion de las Islas Filipinas i de lo que en ellas han trabajado los padres de la Compania de Jesus* (Roma, Estevan Paulino, 1604).

² M. de Ribadeneyra, *Historia de las Islas del Archipiélago, y Reynos de la Gran China, Tartaria, Cuchinchina, Malaca, Sian, Camboxa y Iappon, y de lo sucedido en ellos a los Religiosos Descalcos de la Orden del Seraphico Padre San Francisco, de la Provincia de San Gregorio de las Philipinas* (Barcelona, Gabriel Graells y Giraldo Dotil, 1601).

Nonetheless, seventeenth century Spanish missionary views were strongly coloured by their views on the unquestioned superiority of Hispanic culture, and their conviction that the pre-Hispanic animistic religion was a manifestation of the Devil, whose hand they seemed to see at work almost as frequently as they did the hand of God in the work of Christianization.

Though by the nineteenth century the era of the chronicles had largely died out, the Spanish disdain for pre-Hispanic Filipino culture reappeared in a much more offensive form, precisely as Filipinos began to assert themselves as equal to Spaniards, and to ask for their rights. In an effort to inculcate loyalty and submission, Spanish writers appealed to the Filipino sense of gratitude for the benefits conferred by Spanish rule, and in so doing pictured in ever blacker colours the condition of the Filipinos at the coming of the Spaniards. As one clerical pamphlet intended for popular consumption put it through the mouth of a fictitious Filipino character: society ought not to be called peculiarly Filipino 'because we have contributed nothing of what constitutes civilized society; it is the Spaniards who have done it all'.³ Other writers, imbued with contemporary European racist concepts, spoke, sometimes condescendingly, sometimes viciously, of the superior white race, which had done its best to raise up, in spite of obstacles, the inferior brown Malay.⁴ It was against this background that a nationalist Filipino historiography would come into being.

An indigenous Filipino historiography became possible through the Western higher education implanted by the missionaries in the country shortly after their arrival. Though originally founded for Spaniards, native Filipinos were found in the secondary schools of Manila by the end of the seventeenth century, and in the universities in the eighteenth. However, it was only toward mid-nineteenth century that relatively large numbers of Filipinos sought higher education, first in Manila and then in Spain and elsewhere in Europe.

Not surprisingly, the relatively widespread access of Filipinos to higher education coincided with the beginnings of an articulated nationalism. The awakening of nationalism, as something consciously articulated, can be dated roughly between the years 1880 and 1895. This whole period, during which increasing numbers of Filipino students arrived in Europe, has come to be referred to in Philippine historiography as the 'Propaganda Movement', from the sponsorship given by a Manila organization called the *Comité de Propaganda* to the political lobbying and journalism centered in the Filipino newspaper *La Solidaridad*, first in Barcelona and then in Madrid. The Spanish word *propaganda*

³ *Filipinas ante la razon del indio, obra compuesta por el indigena Capitan Juan para utilidad de sus paisanos y publicada en castellano por el espanol P. Caro* (Madrid, A Gomez Fuentesbro, 1874) p. 277.

⁴ For the condescending view, see F. Foradada, *La soberania de Espana en Filipinas* (Barcelona, Henrich, 1897) pp. 191-201, 241-2. A more odious work was that of Pablo Feced, *Esbozos y pinceladas, por Quioquiap* (Manila, Ramirez, 1898) and his newspaper articles, cited in J.N. Schumacher, *The Propaganda Movement* (Manila, Solidaridad, 1973) p.56.

had none of the derogatory connotations which its modern English translation has acquired, and hence the 'Propagandists' with whom this paper deals refers simply to all the *ilustrados*, that is, those Filipinos possessing higher education, particularly from the universities of Europe. Imbued with the ideas of nineteenth century Liberalism, their writings prepared the way for the Revolution of 1896. Though they were often divided over many issues, and not all belonged to a single organization, all shared in a common campaign for Filipino rights, a campaign which helped to prepare the minds of Filipinos for the Revolution.

They shared a common programme of reforms and assimilation — that is, the application to the Philippines of Spanish metropolitan law and rights, under which all would be recognized equally as Spanish citizens. These common aspirations which they presented to the Spanish government and public, however, though undoubtedly representing the aspirations of the majority in the beginning and remaining the professed programme of the movement right up to the Revolution, increasingly became a front behind which a growing number of nationalists prepared the way for more or less proximate independence. Chief among these was José Rizal, and it was he above all who sought in the Filipino past the pattern for the future.⁵

The search for the Filipino past was both a product of and a stimulus to nationalism. Its beginnings are to be found in Manila among the first generation of Filipino nationalists, or proto-nationalists, who were for the most part Catholic priests graduated from the University in the 1860s. Among them the one to articulate in print the aspirations of his generation, and the chief influence on the next generation, was Father José Burgos. The catalyst of early nationalism was the new stage reached in the age-old controversy between the regular clergy (friars) and the secular clergy. This intra-church struggle had by the nineteenth century become a racial one between Spanish friars and Filipino secular clergy. Though mass ordinations of indigenous priests in the eighteenth century had given some substance to the Spanish contentions as to Filipino incapacity for the priesthood, the emergence of a university-trained generation of clergy laid bare the suppositions of racial inferiority and political unreliability which were the real basis of Spanish opposition to giving responsible positions to Filipino priests. It was in this context that Burgos' defence of his fellow-priests looked to history, to the accomplishments of Filipinos of past generations, as proof of Filipino native capacity.⁶ Though the references are relatively brief, and not all of them accurate, the appeal to history by Burgos is significant principally for the influence it had on the next generation, most especially on José Rizal.⁷

⁵ For the Propaganda Movement in general and the historical context in which it arose, see my book cited in the preceding note.

⁶ The extant works of Burgos, together with a brief account of the movement of the clergy may be found in J.N. Schumacher, *Father Jose Burgos: Priest and Nationalist* (Quezon City, Ateneo de Manila University Press, 1972). For his appeal to history, see esp. pp. 72-7.

⁷ See T.M. Kalaw (ed.), *Epistolario Rizalino* (Manila, Bureau of Printing, 1930-1938) Vol. II, pp. 116, 149, 154; Vol. III, pp. 136-7.

The first systematic attempt by Filipinos to explore their historical past, however, took place in the 1880s in Manila. The occasion seems to have been the general European interest in history in the late nineteenth century, as filtered into Manila through Spaniards resident there. Though the Filipinos displaying historical interests were university-educated, there is little reason to think that their interest grew out of their academic pursuits, since the version of history taught in Manila schools was, to say the most for it, more calculated to inculcate Filipino loyalty and gratitude to Spain than to convey accurate knowledge of the Filipino past. Rather, the impulse seems to have come from a more general interest in Philippine folklore and history that began to manifest itself in Manila in the late 1880s. Spanish journalists like Wenceslao E. Retana began to publish articles on provincial customs and folklore in Manila newspapers; unpublished chronicles from earlier centuries were resurrected and began to be published in serial form in the same newspapers, like the *Historia general sacro-profana, política y natural de las Islas del Poniente llamadas Filipinas*, by Juan Delgado, an eighteenth century Spanish Jesuit.⁸ Soon a group of subscribers initiated the series *Biblioteca Historica Filipina*, which in the early 1890s published several other old chronicles as well. Though the project was Spanish, intended as a 'national monument erected to the glories of Spain', the list of subscribers shows substantial Filipino participation.⁹

It is against this background that the historical and ethnographical studies of Isabelo de los Reyes must be seen. From the pen of this prolific and indefatigable Filipino journalist came a series of works, generally published first in the form of newspaper articles, and later in book form.¹⁰ De los Reyes' books make little overt attempt to glorify the Filipino pre-colonial past; indeed, one caused a Spanish opponent of the Filipino nationalists to comment: 'the author . . . scarcely concedes anything praiseworthy to have existed among the natives of old'.¹¹ Nonetheless, Reyes, as his later career as founder of the *Iglesia Filipina Independiente* would show, was an ardent nationalist, and his purpose may be seen in the preface to one of his early works, *El Folk-Lore Filipino*. He says: 'Each one serves his people according to his own way of thinking, and I, with my *Folk-Lore Ilocano* believe that I am contributing to establishing the past of my people'. It is this desire to know the Filipino past, to establish a Filipino identity, which runs through the writings of De los Reyes. As scholarly history in the modern sense, these works are of limited value, based as they are for the most part on a few Spanish sources uncritically transcribed. The

⁸ W.E. Retana, *Aparato bibliografico de la historia general de Filipinas* (Madrid, Minuesa de los Rios, 1906) Vol. III, no. 2710.

⁹ See the edition of Delgado's *Historia* (Manila, Imprenta de El Eco de Filipinas, 1892) pp. v, 961-1009.

¹⁰ See bibliographical appendix.

¹¹ Retana, III, no. 2528.

Filipino past is a source of identity, not a golden age; nor is it clearly presented as a motive for seeking independence from Spain. His contemporaries, whether Spaniards or educated Filipinos, did not hold his historical work in high regard, though they found his observations on Filipino folklore and customs of considerable value.¹²

A second strain in Filipino historiography, contemporary to that of De los Reyes but appearing in Madrid instead of Manila, was that represented by Pedro Paterno. Paterno concentrated on the condition of the Filipinos prior to the Spanish contact in a series of books published between 1887 and 1892. But where De los Reyes had been content to look for Filipino identity in merely recounting their history, Paterno aimed at proving the equality of Filipino to Spaniard by extolling and magnifying the pre-Hispanic civilization. Not only did he make lengthy extracts from the early chroniclers, supplementing them with miscellaneous erudite, if often irrelevant, citations of modern authors, but he employed his ingenuity in extracting from his sources a demonstration of the high level of Filipino culture at the Spanish contact. His conclusion, however, was not that colonialism had destroyed a flourishing civilization, a truly Filipino one. Rather, Paterno accepted Spanish culture as the norm — only to claim that it had all really existed in the Philippines before the coming of the Spaniards. The burden of his message is that the Filipinos are Spaniards no less than those born in the Peninsula and, one might almost say, had been Spaniards at heart even before the Spaniards arrived in the Philippines. Not only did he attempt in his first historical work, *La antigua civilización tagálog*, to parallel the stages of development of the 'Luzonic isles' to the corresponding stages of the development of European civilization, but in his *El cristianismo en la antigua civilización tagálog* attempted to show that the ancient Filipinos had been Christians in all but name long before the coming of the Spanish Catholic missionaries. *Bathalismo*, the worship of the Tagalog Supreme Being, Bat'hala, had a body of doctrine which not only contained such Christian teachings as the Incarnation and the Atonement, but even the mystery of the Trinity in inchoate form. It was not then surprising for Paterno that Spanish missionaries had found evangelization so easy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries — Christianity was already there in substance! The explanation of this remarkable coincidence of *Bathalismo* and Christianity Paterno ingenuously found in a supposed contact between the Philippines and Indian civilization, itself the product of the preaching of the Apostles Bartholomew and Thomas in India.

With such a foundation, Paterno's subsequent works drew expected conclusions. The moral teachings of *Bathalismo* expounded in *La familia tagalog en la historia universal* turn out to be remarkably coincident with

¹² Retana, III, nos. 2788, 2789; T.H. Pardo de Tavera, *Biblioteca Filipina* (Washington, Government Printing Office, 1903), nos. 2370-2378.

Christian teaching on family and marital morality. Similarly in *El Barangay* the pre-Hispanic organization of government under the *barangay* system displays a 'Tagalog kingdom', which, though monarchical, was democratic in organization — thus providentially uniting all the best features of contemporary Spain!¹³

Such conclusions, of course, do not come from the texts cited at great length, but from the fantastic ingenuity of the author. Perhaps they are best characterized by the judgment of the Filipino bibliographer, T.H. Pardo de Tavera, a contemporary of Paterno, speaking of his *El cristianismo en la antigua civilizacion tagalog*: 'A book full of surprises for history, for science, and for reason!' Other Filipinos in Europe were privately amused or embarrassed at Paterno's writings.¹⁴ Though they can be considered an expression of nationalism in their rejection of the racial superiority of the colonial masters, and as such received public commendation from some of the Filipinos in Madrid, their frame of reference was in fact fundamentally a colonial one, in which the metropolis provided the standard to measure the cultural achievement of the colonized. Paterno did speak of the Filipinos as being 'ever-free allies' of Spain as a result of the blood-compact freely entered into between the *maguinoos* (nobility of the Filipino people) with the Spaniards of the sixteenth century,¹⁵ but it is difficult to believe that he himself placed great faith in his miscellanies of history, irrelevant erudition, and outright plagiarism. Nonetheless, his writings do represent, however ineptly, one strain of Filipino nationalist thought. For many conservative Propagandists, the ideal was not a separation from Spain, but Spanish recognition of Filipino capacity to participate freely in the running of their own affairs, and to share according to ability, not race, in the government of that part of Spain in the Pacific called the Philippines. This assimilationist ideal did not differ essentially from the nationalism of the generation of Burgos.

If the role of history in seeking national identity was still somewhat vague in De los Reyes and his collaborators, and if its use by Paterno logically submerged rather than manifested that identity, José Rizal had much more clearly defined ideas. For Rizal history was at the very heart of his nationalism. It served as a weapon to combat the pretensions to beneficence of the colonial power. It provided an explanation of the contemporary situation of the Philippines as well as a picture of the glorious past destroyed by Spanish intrusion. It offered the key to national identity and corresponding orientations for future national development, as well as examples to emulate in the nationalist struggle. Finally it provided a legitimation of the struggle for freedom and the destruction of colonial rule. Rizal accepted Western historical research with its

¹³ See bibliographical appendix.

¹⁴ Pardo de Tavera, *Biblioteca Filipina*, no. 1940; see also nos. 1938, 1941-1943. Also Rizal in *Epistolario Rizalino*, V, p. 105; and another Filipino named Aguirre in *Epistolario Rizalino*, Vol. I, p. 280.

¹⁵ Schumacher, *Propaganda Movement*, p. 207.

rigorous methodology, and wished his work to be judged by those standards. But at the same time he wrote as a Filipino and an Asian, and worked intensely to read once more through Asian eyes the accounts that had come from European pens. European methodology could be used to give a Filipino meaning to the history of his people.

Rizal's serious interest in history dated from his stay in Germany in 1886, where he was putting the finishing touches to his first novel, *Noli me tangere*, a full-scale attack on the existing Spanish colonial regime. Attracted by German scholarship on the Philippines, he made contact with various scholars, most notably the Austrian Ferdinand Blumentritt. In his correspondence with the latter Rizal expressed his gratitude to the German scholars who had studied his native land, and his desire to emulate them. Before long he was plunging himself into these studies, and when preparing to leave Germany for the Philippines again, spoke sadly of the nostalgia he would feel at his exile from his *wissenschaftlichen Heimath*.¹⁶ Under the influence of Blumentritt, Rizal had come to see the need for a scholarly history of the Philippines. At first he urged Blumentritt himself to write it, in terms which manifest Rizal's concept of history's role in the development of national identity, and the standards he set for it:

The Philippines will be deeply grateful to you if they see a history of our country, complete and purged of legend by the critical method. You are, I believe, the only one who can write this history. I have the boldness to do it, but I do not know enough; I have not read so many books about my homeland; the libraries of Spain are closed to me; I need time for other things; and my narrative will always be suspect of partisan spirit . . .¹⁷

He lamented the irony that made it necessary for Filipinos to turn to German scholars so as to know their own country:

If only I might become a professor in my homeland, I would wake to life these studies of our homeland, this *nosci te ipsum* which creates a true sense of national identity (*Selbstgefühl*) and impels nations to do great deeds. But I shall never be allowed to open a college in my native land . . .¹⁸

¹⁶ *Epistolario Rizalino*, V, p. 117; also V, pp. 30, 55.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

When circumstances in 1887 made it impossible for him to remain in the Philippines, however, he resolved on putting his hand to the task himself. The inclination had long been there, but earlier he had lamented the harsh necessity by which, 'unlike the youth of happy nations, our youth dare not give itself to love, nor to silent scholarship; we must all sacrifice something to politics, even though we have no inclination for it . . .'.¹⁹ Now he directed himself to London, where he spent most of 1888 in the British Museum, poring over the old Spanish chronicles. If he could not write the complete history of the Philippines that he had urged on Blumentritt, he would try to illuminate the years of the Spanish conquest, and the prior state of Filipino society. The vehicle he chose for his effort was the early seventeenth century chronicle of Antonio de Morga, *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas*.²⁰ Written only a few decades after the conquest by a learned member of the *Real Audiencia*, Morga's chronicle gave much attention to ancient Filipino customs. For Rizal, already committed to the destruction of the prestige and power of the friars in the Philippines, it had the added attraction of being the only major chronicle not written by a Spanish missionary. The rare Spanish original had been translated into English and annotated by Lord Henry Stanley earlier, but Rizal's edition, though indeed inspired by the canons of German historical scholarship, was to serve more pragmatic purposes as well. It was to form the foundation for the new Filipino society which he had before his eyes in all his writings. His first novel, the *Noli me tângere*, had been a merciless critique of the Spanish colonial society and the subservient Filipinos the decadent system bred; his second novel, already planned but put aside to undertake his edition of Morga, would complete the critique and point the direction to be taken for the redemption of the race from the corrupting influence of colonialism. The edition of Morga was to form the link between these two, and lay the foundation for the struggle to come. In his preface Rizal makes clear its place in his master-plan:

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 111.

²⁰ See bibliographical appendix. There is an analogy between Rizal's use of a Spanish historian to assert a Filipino national culture equal to that of Spain, and Le Van Huu's use of Chinese historiographical norms to define the relationship between Vietnamese and Chinese emperors, as delineated by Wolters. For Rizal, however, the Spanish historian provided only a base; it was the canons of contemporary German historical method rather than retrograde Spanish historiography that validated for Rizal his interpretation of the pre-Hispanic past. This program for expounding past, present, and future finds a striking parallel in Sukarno's ideas on the importance of history in the Indonesian national struggle, as cited in Reid's article. Indeed many of the conflicting strains Reid describes in Indonesian nationalist historiography bear analogy with those in Filipino writing, with the exception of the rather different significance of the dominant religion in each of the two peoples.

In the *Noli me tangere* I began the sketch of the present state of our fatherland; the effect which my attempt produced made me understand that before continuing to unveil to your eyes other succeeding pictures I must first make known the past, so that it may be possible to judge better the present and measure the path which has been traversed during three centuries.

Born and brought up, as almost all of you, in ignorance of our Yesterday, without an authoritative voice to speak of what we neither saw nor studied, I considered it necessary to invoke the testimony of an illustrious Spaniard who directed the destinies of the Filipinos in the beginnings of the new era and witnessed the last moments of our ancient nationality

If this book succeeds in awakening in you the consciousness of our past, which has been blotted out from our memories, and in rectifying what has been falsified by calumny, then I will not have laboured in vain. With this foundation, tiny as it may be, we can all dedicate ourselves to studying the future.²¹

The twofold purpose implied in this programme was implemented by copious annotations, depicting the advanced state of pre-Hispanic Filipino society and portraying the destructive effects of colonization on that society. Each point Morga made concerning the accomplishments of the pre-Hispanic Filipinos, Rizal contrasted with their subsequent decline. The Filipinos had exported silk to Japan in the sixteenth century; today the best silk comes from there.²² The Filipino Panda[y] Pira had forged cannon before the coming of the Spaniards; with his death, 'there were no Spaniards who were able to do what he had done, nor were his sons as skilled as their father'.²³ The shipbuilding industry of the sixteenth century was now reduced to insignificance.²⁴ Filipino agriculture and industry had decayed — the growing of cotton and the weaving of various kinds of cloth, even the growing of rice, the mining of gold and fashioning it into ornaments.²⁵ The reason for all this decadence was that the natives:

. . . seeing that they were molested and exploited by their *encomenderos* for the sake of the products of their industry, . . . began to break their looms, abandon their gold mines, their fields, etc., imagining that their conquerors would leave them alone on seeing them poor, wretched, and unexploitable . . .²⁶

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. v-vi.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 191 n.2.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 23 n.1, 27 n.4.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 23 n.3.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 229, 281-2, 284, 289.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 337 n.2.

As a result of this exploitation, the population had decreased drastically in Mindoro, Panay, Pampanga, and other formerly flourishing regions.²⁷

The moral level of Filipino society 'was for that age very advanced';²⁸ indeed, in many respects it was superior to that of Christian Europe. Thus, what the Spaniards called slavery had none of the degrading aspects which Roman or European slavery had; rather, it was basically a familial relationship, and even showed the concern for strict justice among the early Filipinos by the careful way it was regulated.²⁹ If nonetheless slavery was to be deplored, the Spanish conquest had worsened rather than bettered the situation.³⁰ The Filipina, unlike her counterpart in other cultures and even in modern Europe, was held in a dignity which she has maintained. If the early chroniclers record a lack of appreciation for virginity before marriage, in this the Filipinas obeyed an instinct of nature; in any case, the Filipina of today yields to no other race in her chastity, least of all to hypocritical Europe with its history of fertility cults, prostitution, etc.³¹ In the past, the witnessed word sufficed for a binding last will; with Christianity, there is now need of endless litigation. Theft was unknown in past days; only with Spanish Christian civilization has it become a major evil.³²

The Spanish conquest had then been largely a calamity for the Filipinos; the Spanish pretensions to *pacify* a province and to *entrust* (*encomendar*) it to an *encomendero* for its government were cruel sarcasms. 'To give a province as an *encomienda* really meant: to hand it over to pillage, to cruelty, and to someone's avarice, as may be seen from the way the *encomenderos* later acted.'³³ Pacification meant in reality to make war on, or sow enmities between groups of Filipinos.³⁴ The conquest itself Rizal saw partly as the result of the disunion of the Filipinos among themselves,³⁵ partly a result of force, where the persuasive powers of the missionaries proved inefficacious,³⁶ and partly an acquiescence of the Filipinos to alliance with the Spaniards, deceived by their promises of friendship and loyalty, or won by Christianity.³⁷ The Filipino chiefs, themselves tyrannical lords over an unfree society, 'finding neither love

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 232-4, 289.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. xxxii n.4.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 298-9, 301.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 295.

³¹ *Ibid.*, p. 263, 308, 309.

³² *Ibid.*, pp. 303-4, 305-6.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 12 n.1.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 57 n.3.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 19 n.1.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 259 n.2.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 41 n.3.

nor lofty sentiments in the enslaved masses, found themselves without strength and force' to resist the Spaniards.³⁸ In the end, however, the submission to Spanish rule did not come by means of conquest in the major islands,³⁹ but rather it was effected 'by means of agreements, treaties of friendship, and mutual alliances'.⁴⁰ Unfortunately, the Spaniards have not kept their part of the contractual relationship then entered into.⁴¹ This theme of the *pacto de sangre* — the blood compact made by Magellan and Legazpi with early Filipino datus according to the pre-Hispanic custom — would recur frequently in the thought of the Filipino nationalists of this period. For them it symbolized the historical fact that for the most part Spanish sovereignty over the Philippines had been accepted with little bloodshed — not even a conquest properly so called, as Rizal notes, but an agreement freely entered into, by which Spain had committed herself to bring the Filipinos along the path of progress and higher civilization. Though not explicitly expressed, the implications of such a view were visible throughout Rizal's book — Spain had failed to carry out her part of the contract; hence the Filipinos were now in their turn released from its obligations. History now serves as the moral legitimation of the coming anticolonial struggle.⁴² He felt deeply that it was in understanding the pre-Hispanic Philippines that the Filipinos would understand themselves, would find the identity on which a new nation could rise. Earlier he had urged his colleagues in Barcelona to learn Italian, so as to translate the manuscript of Pigafetta, Magellan's chronicler, 'so that people may know in what state we were in 1520'.⁴³ He is, moreover, at pains to show links existing before the coming of the Spaniards, pointing to Morga's remarks on the similarity of customs among the different linguistic groups as evidence 'that the links of friendship were more frequent than the wars and differences. Perhaps there existed a confederation'.⁴⁴ Elsewhere he points to the ancient tradition which indicated Sumatra as the common place of origin of the Filipinos. 'These traditions were completely lost, just like the mythology and genealogies of which the old historians speak, thanks to the zeal of the religious in extirpating every remembrance of our nationality, of paganism, or of idolatry'.⁴⁵ Not only were the traditions lost, but likewise much of the artistic and cultural heritage. The early Spanish chroniclers had commented on the musical ability and graceful dances of the Filipinos, and

³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 299-300 n.3.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. xxxiii n.3.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, p. xxxii n.1.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 304 n.4.

⁴² On contractual theory in the thought of the Filipino nationalists, see Schumacher, *Propaganda Movement*, pp. 206-7.

⁴³ *Epistolario Rizalino*, II, p. 118.

⁴⁴ Rizal, *Sucesos*, p. 297 n.1.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 259 n.1.

these had even been incorporated into Christian religious celebrations. All this skill, which the Filipinos did not owe to the Spaniards, for they possessed it 'thanks to God, to Nature, and to their own culture', was now forgotten. It was lost because of the fault 'of the Filipinos themselves, who hastened to abandon what was theirs to take up what was new'.⁴⁶ As may be seen, the concern of Rizal is not solely to downgrade the Spanish contribution, but to make Filipinos realize what had been their own, which in an ill-conceived moment they had abandoned.

If Rizal's history is concerned with leading the Filipinos back to their own national identity, it does not stop there. In an earlier scientific paper delivered before a society of German ethnologists, he had taken occasion from the existence of a common fable of the monkey and the tortoise, found not only among the various Filipino ethnolinguistic groups, but likewise in Japan, to conclude that 'it must be the inheritance of an extinct civilization, common to all the races which ever lived in that region'.⁴⁷ Rather remarkably for the period in which he wrote, he showed concern not only for a Filipino point of view, but for an Asian one. His concern was not simply to refute Spanish pretensions to superiority over Filipinos, but to assert Asian rights and an Asian point of view against that of 'Europe, so satisfied with its own morality'.⁴⁸ Speaking of the Spanish discovery of the Solomon Islands, he commented:

Death has always been the first sign of the introduction of European civilization in the Pacific; God grant that it may not be the last. For to judge from statistics, the Pacific islands which become 'civilized' suffer dreadful depopulation. The first exploit of Magellan on his arrival in the Marianas was to burn more than forty houses, many boats, and seven inhabitants, for having stolen a boat from him. Those unhappy savages saw nothing evil in theft, which they did with naturalness, just as civilized peoples view fishing, hunting, and the subjugation of weak or badly armed peoples.⁴⁹

Europeans had always applied shifting standards for judging moral conduct of their own differently than that of nations they considered 'barbarian' like the Cambodians, the Ternatans, the Japanese.⁵⁰ Thus Rizal speaks of the 'first piracy of the inhabitants of the South recorded in the history of the Philippines', 'for there had been others before, the first being those committed

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 331-2 n.1.

⁴⁷ Cited in Leon Ma. Guerrero, *The First Filipino* (Manila, National Heroes Commission, 1963) pp. 204-5.

⁴⁸ Rizal, *Sucesos*, p. 263 n.1.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 66 n.1.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 151 n.3.

by the expedition of Magellan, who captured the ships of friendly islands, and even of those with which he was not yet acquainted, demanding large ransom from them'.⁵¹ When the historians comment unfavourably on faults or crimes of the natives, whose conduct they interpret always in the worse possible sense:

... they forget that in almost all occasions, the motive for the quarrels has always come from those who claim to civilize them by force of arquebuses and at the price of the territory of the weak inhabitants. What would they not say if the crimes committed by Portuguese, Spaniards, Dutch, etc. in the colonies had been committed by the natives?⁵²

Though Rizal's edition of Morga's *Sucesos* was his major historical work, his are known, he was conscious of Filipino links with other Asians, he spent time in Japan studying Japanese culture and ways, and he increasingly showed signs of his consciousness of Filipino solidarity with other Malay peoples. Conversely, for all the attraction that European scientific and technological progress held for him, and his personal nostalgia for the world of German scholarship, it was not only retrograde and corrupt Spanish colonialism that he abhorred, but it was Europe as a whole with its sense of racial superiority that he likewise rejected.

Though Rizal's edition of Morga's *Sucesos* was his major historical work, his view of Philippine history appears repeatedly in various pamphlets and essays, generally first appearing in *La Solidaridad*. In 'Filipinas dentro de cien años', he sketches the same themes of how the people had abandoned their tyrannical native rulers and accepted Spanish sovereignty, hoping to alleviate their lot. But in the process they had lost their culture, their ethics, their literature, their customs, though in their debasement they were now beginning to awake anew.⁵³ More especially in 'Sobre la indolencia del Filipino', he draws on the themes he had emphasized in his edition of Morga to explain the indolence which was the favourite reproach of Spanish colonialists. The indolence, Rizal says, is not to be denied, though indeed even more notable among the colonialists than their subjects. What must be sought out is why it exists among Filipinos. For 'the Filipinos have not always been what they are, witnesses whereto are all the historians of the first years after the discovery of the Islands'. Drawing not only from Morga but from the religious chroniclers, he traces the decay of Filipino mining, agriculture, and commerce which were flourishing before the conquest, but were gradually destroyed by Spanish oppression on the one hand, and Dutch and Moro wars which devastated the disarmed Filipinos as a result of colonization, on the other.⁵⁴ Just as the past serves for orientation for the future

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 142-3 n.2.

⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 71 n.3.

⁵³ Published in *La Solidaridad*, 1 (1889) pp. 96-9. The essay is continued through several succeeding issues.

⁵⁴ Published in *La Solidaridad*, 2 (1890) pp. 158-60, 167-70, 178-80, 190-5, 202-5.

in the first essay, in this it serves to explain the lamentable present. The themes of Morga's history are here brought together in a concentrated and devastating picture.

There has been a tendency among certain historians to see in the Propaganda Movement an essentially sterile effort, a misconceived reform movement of the wealthy *ilustrado* class, whose utopian dreams the masses impatiently thrust aside to make the revolution under the leadership of Andres Bonifacio.⁵⁵ Such simplistic class generalizations seem rather unhelpful to this writer, as a closer examination of the facts reveals numerous *ilustrado* revolutionaries inconvenient to account for, to say nothing of counter-revolutionary masses fighting their revolutionary fellow peasants. The question is too complex to be examined here, but one area of undeniable continuity is the role of the Propagandists' historiography in supplying the legitimation for the actual protagonists of the people's revolution.

The first manifesto to the public by Andres Bonifacio, founder of the revolutionary Katipunan, in his newspaper *Kalayaan* (Freedom) reads like a summary of Rizal's historiography:

In the early times when the Spaniards had not yet set foot in this land, under the government of our true compatriots, the Filipinos were living in great abundance and prosperity. They lived in harmony with neighbouring countries, especially with the Japanese, with whom they carried on commerce and trade, and their industry produced extraordinarily abundant fruits. As a result everyone lived in the fashion of the wealthy. Young and old, and even women knew how to read and write in our own native writing . . .

Then came the Spaniards, whom the Filipinos received in peace and friendship, with the blood-compact, and ever since it has been the Filipinos who have supported the Spaniards with their wealth and their blood. In exchange the Filipinos have received only treachery and cruelty; the time has come to recognize the source of all their misfortunes and unite to restore the happiness and prosperity of their native land.⁵⁶

The language is the Tagalog of the people rather than the Spanish of the *ilustrados*, and the tone is one of an impassioned cry to action rather than that of scholarly investigation, but the lineage from Rizal to Bonifacio is unmistakable. Other more inflammatory pamphlets would appeal to the pre-Hispanic kings, and to the knowledge already possessed by the Filipinos of the true God, as proclaimed in Paterno's treatises.⁵⁷ The Spanish historiography which mandated

⁵⁵ Especially T.A. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses* (Quezon City, University of the Philippines, 1956), and subsequently in his other books and essays.

⁵⁶ Agapito Bagumbayan (pseud.), 'Ang dapat mabatid ng mga Tagalog', in T. A. Agoncillo (ed.), *The Writings and Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (Manila, 1963) pp. 68-9. The quoted passage is from p. 68; translation mine.

⁵⁷ See Schumacher, *The Propaganda Movement*, pp. 207-8.

Filipino loyalty to Spain under moral sanctions, had been supplanted by a Filipino history which had provided a rational and moral legitimation for the new nation, not merely for the intellectuals, but more important, for the people indoctrinated with notions of obligation to Spain who were to fight the Revolution.

Ileto's essay in this volume has raised the question of how this moral legitimation of revolution elaborated by the Propagandists 'provided the impulse for the breaking of ties of *utang na lo'ob* to Spain that centuries of colonial rule had impressed upon the *indios*'. His analysis of the *Historia famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*, which served as a model for the new identity to be created among the ordinary Tagalogs has provided a partial answer. But it took a 'marginal man' like the self-educated Bonifacio, or his close associate in the Katipunan, the Manila university student Emilio Jacinto, who read and comprehended at least the main thrust of the scholarly *ilustrado* portrayal in Spanish of the Filipino past, but still shared in the *awit*-shaped perceptions of the Tagalog-speaking ordinary folk, to mediate the *ilustrado* perception into the thought and value-world of the folk. These factors explain both the earlier outbreak of the Revolution among the Tagalogs and the key role the latter people played to the end.

But this very explanation raises the further question as to how the Revolution extended itself to the Bikol and Visayan regions. Though a serious study of the Revolution in the non-Tagalog regions has scarcely begun, the indications are that, unlike in the Tagalog provinces, there it was generally *ilustrados* and *principales* who initiated and led the Revolution in their regions, and who mobilized the masses to support it. These Spanish-speaking provincial leaders were acquainted with and had been influenced by the Propagandist writings during their education in Spain or in Manila, and it was they who mobilized the non-Tagalog masses. Though Ileto's observation that patron-client ties do not provide a sufficient explanation of the breaking of the ties of *utang na lo'ob* is valid here also, I would suggest that especially in these regions, it was the Filipino clergy which proved to be the complementary and deciding factor.⁵⁸ For the remembrance of the past on which their *utang na lo'ob* was based was not the experience of benevolence on the part of the colonial government, which, at least in the nineteenth century had offered little motive for such gratitude. Rather it was the religiously inspired and religiously sanctioned debt of gratitude to the Spain which had brought to the *indios* the priceless gift of the Catholic faith, and without whose rule Catholicism would disappear, as inculcated in a multitude of primary school textbooks and pious pamphlets, as well as the sermons of the Spanish clergy. In the face of this religious sanction scholarly history was impotent; only a countervailing religious inspiration and sanction

⁵⁸ It is impossible to document this fully here, but the judgment is based on my own study, currently in progress, on the Filipino clergy and the Revolution. The evidence comes principally from the so-called Philippine Insurgent Records, from those of the religious orders and of the archdiocese of Manila, and from American military reports.

could prevail among the masses. This the Filipino clergy could, and in many cases did, provide, even to the extent of transforming the revolutionary struggle into a 'guerra santa' and a 'crusade'.⁵⁹ Once the enemy became Protestant America rather than Catholic Spain, the role of the clergy became ever more crucial and effective in encouraging mass resistance.

A final question remains — to what extent did Rizal's picture, or for that matter Paterno's, influence not only the Revolution, but the following generations? Though it is true that the major thrust of these works, as has been pointed out, affected not only the national Spanish-speaking elite, but also the mass propaganda in Tagalog from the Katipunan, it should be admitted that the actual circulation of the Propagandists' works was quite limited. Paterno published in Spain for Spaniards, and there is little evidence that his works circulated in the Philippines, except as reprinted in *La Solidaridad*, the clandestinely circulated newspaper of the Propagandists. Rizal did indeed write for his Filipino countrymen, but evidence is lacking of any wide circulation of his edition of Morga, even among the Spanish-literate minority reached by his novels. It was rather his key ideas, or a simplified form of them, which had their impact on the ordinary Filipinos, and this almost exclusively among the Tagalogs. Only in a limited sense then did he succeed during his lifetime in his avowed purpose of laying 'the foundation [from which] we can all dedicate ourselves to study our future'.

Ironically, it would be under the American regime, which Rizal never knew, that his and fellow Propagandists' historical views would be influential, but in a direction Rizal would never have envisaged. A handful of young Filipinos, most of them just finishing their university studies at the outbreak of the Revolution — Felipe Calderon, Manuel Artigas, and Jaime de Veyra are names which stand out — continued the study of their people's past. An even larger number of Americans — James Robertson, Austin Craig, and H. Otley Beyer, to name a few — shared these historical interests, and even more numerous were the American authors of history textbooks for the new American-inspired public school system. Rizal's works especially received considerable attention, so much so that the political activists of the late 1960s could attempt to portray Rizal as a bourgeois hero manufactured by the Americans. But of course only one facet of Rizal's purpose was congenial to the Americans — his contention that Filipino culture was not simply a creation of Spain and Catholicism, and had indeed suffered from them. Rizal's historical weapon to undermine Spanish legitimacy fitted perfectly into American efforts to wean Filipinos from any sense of gratitude to Spain. Indeed, the blacker the

⁵⁹ Telesforo Canseco, 'Historia de la insurreccion filipina en Cavite', a contemporary eyewitness account in the Archivo de la Provincia del Santisimo Rosario (Manila), HCF, t. 7, pp. 56, 62-63, and *passim*. For some indications of the religious sanctions placed on the debt of gratitude alleged to be owed by Filipinos to Spain, see the work of Father Casimiro Herrero, cited in n. 3, and that of Foradada, cited in n. 4, only two among a multitude of such works in the late 19th century.

picture that could be painted of the Spanish colonial experience and its evil effect on a flourishing pre-Hispanic Filipino culture, the more neatly it all fitted into the American-sponsored ideology – that the Filipino people, stunted abruptly in its development by Spanish misrule, could eventually become a great nation under American tutelage, if only they embraced American ideals, values, and practices.

So complete was this American appropriation of the Propagandists' reconstruction of the Filipino past, that post-independence nationalist historiography in its own reconstruction of the Filipino past and search for national identity has tended to underplay or ignore, paradoxically, both the period Rizal saw as the destruction of Filipino culture, and the work of Rizal himself – the former as a Spanish period, the latter as an American view. Only the recent works of Ileteo and a very few others have begun to re-evaluate those values and perceptions, superficially derivative of Hispanic sources, as authentically and creatively Filipino. Hopefully this essay has demonstrated that at least Rizal among the Propagandists had already pointed the way to an authentically Filipino and Asian re-reading of the Filipino past on another level.

THE NATIONALIST QUEST FOR AN INDONESIAN PAST

Anthony Reid

This symposium has constantly reminded us that perceptions of the future and the past are interdependent. Modern nationalisms have been no exception in their synchronic reassessments of history and national destiny. What does surprise is the relative slowness of Indonesian nationalism to develop this reassessment into a complete history. Not until the period of Japanese military rule did a substantial national history by an Indonesian appear in the form of Sanusi Pane's *Sedjarah Indonesia*, reprinted many times since as a standard textbook. At least one brief history appeared earlier in Padang, *Ringkasan Sedjarah Indonesia*, produced in 1938 by two little-known young men. The hazards of the undertaking were well brought out by one nationalist reviewer who complained that a reader might reasonably ask whether it was written by a foreigner. Faithfully following the pattern established by the standard Dutch textbook, Eijkman & Stapel, the writers had clearly failed to develop a picture of the past to match Indonesia's growing faith in its national future.¹ A similar reception appears to have greeted the more scholarly *Riwayat Indonesia* of Poerbatjaraka in 1952.

Even Malaya, whose pre-war nationalism was but a small rivulet to the major current in Indonesia, had produced its first modern national history more than a decade earlier. The first volume of Abdul Hadi bin Haji Hasan's *Sejarah Alam Melayu* appeared in 1925.² Although published under the auspices of the colonial Education Department, it offered a coherent, detailed picture of the Malayan past drawing as much from the Malay chronicles and Munshi Abdullah as from Western scholars like Mills, Fruin-Mees and Winstedt. The national theme for Abdul Hadi was self-evident, requiring a relatively short leap from the traditional perspective of Malay writers. It was the story of the Malay people, their kingdoms, and their dealings with foreigners.

The task of the Indonesian historian was in every way more difficult. Pride in the separate pasts of various regions and peoples had to be reconciled with the theme of a new unity whose limits were a colonial boundary. An analogous problem might have been expected to face early Philippine nationalists, yet in Fr. Schumacher's account of their historical writing we find no sense that unity is a major problem. The unifying work of the friars lay too far in the past to be in competition with the cultural nationalisms of each people.

¹ Review by Darmawidjaja in *Poedjangga Baroe*, 6 (1938-39), p.99. Eijkman & Stapel, *Leerboek der Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch Oost-Indie* was the standard text for senior secondary schools (AMS), in its ninth edition in 1939. An abbreviated version of it for lower secondary schools (MULO) was in its sixteenth edition. Soedjatmoko et al., *An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography* (Ithaca, Cornell, 1965), p.1a.

² Abdul Hadi bin Haji Hasan, *Sejarah Alam Melayu*, Penggal I (Singapore, 1925).

One of the few early Indonesian nationalists who could accept a Dutch-created historical unity with equanimity was E.F.E. Douwes Dekker – the intellectual founder of *Indisch* (Indies) nationalism, but significantly a Eurasian uncommitted to any specific Indonesian cultural tradition. He has a claim to be the first national historian of Indonesia, though his *Vluchtig Overzicht van de Geschiedenis van Indonesia*, apparently written in Dutch for the pupils of his Ksatrian Institute in the 1930s, was not published until an Indonesian translation appeared in 1942. Douwes Dekker ingenuously explained that the various islands ‘as a result of various events gradually became *one* archipelago, and fell under *one* authority, the Dutch government. The laws are the same in all these islands. The social structure is the same. Because of this it can be said that these islands became *one* region’. He was candid enough to admit in addition that among the islands ‘The most important is Java . . . our knowledge of this island far exceeds that of others; moreover this island has the highest civilization. For this reason what we will emphasise is the history of Java’.³

Douwes Dekker’s definition of national history was convincing only to those who shared his belief that the political power of a remote government in The Hague was the primary issue. Among the first generation of Indonesians graduating from high schools during World War I, there were many who reacted against the Dutch in quite a different way. For them the ‘Indisch nationalism’ promoted by Douwes Dekker and Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo was an aggressive form of that same Dutch cultural dominance they resented. They sought a revival and strengthening of their own heritage, not identification with an artificial new polity of Dutch making.

The origins of this controversy belong to the history of Indonesia’s first modern political organization, Budi Utomo, in which Tjipto represented a tendency towards anti-Dutch politics, while Dr Radjiman led the dominant group which wanted to work primarily for the revival of Javanese culture. Although Tjipto lost this contest within the Budi Utomo leadership, his political radicalism was much more appealing to the younger element in the organization.⁴ The young intellectuals who promoted ‘Javanese nationalism’ from about 1917 admired his courage and shared his anti-Dutch politics. They differed radically only over Tjipto’s advocacy of Indisch nationalism:

³ E.F.E. Douwes Dekker, *Ichtsar Riwayat Indonesia Koeno dan Permai, oentoek sekolah menengah* (Bandung, n.d. [1942?]), pp.5-6. John Echols, *Preliminary Checklist of Indonesian imprints during the Japanese period* (Ithaca, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1963), lists under the authorship of Siahaan what is presumably a reworking of the same book in 1944, with the title *Ichtsar Sedjarah Indonesia, untuk sekolah menengah*.

⁴ These debates are well discussed by Surya Ningrat [Ki Hadjar Dewantara], ‘Het Javaansch Nationalisme in de Indische Beweging’, in ‘*Soembangsih*’: *Gedenkboek Boedi-Oetomo 1902 – 20 mei – 1918* (Amsterdam, Nederl. Indie Oud en Nieuw, 1918), esp. pp.30-2, 39-40.

Our history will develop towards the unity of the Indisch people, but not towards an Indisch national unity. An Indisch nation — could this be attained — would again fly into fragments . . . Anyone who is sympathetic to a natural, gradual development . . . can not demand that the Javanese nation sacrifice itself to an Indisch nation . . . The sacrifice is too great.⁵

The intellectual centre of this argument was the 'Committee for Javanese nationalism' established in Batavia in 1917. Its leaders, Soerio Koesoemo, Abdoel Rachman, and Satiman, wrote in Dutch like the Indisch nationalists, but they did so apologetically, believing that their future, like their past, must be Javanese. They wished their colleagues in the outer islands well, but implicitly felt them to be so behind Java in every field that they could only be a millstone to the Javanese nation.

So you stay in Sumatra, and you there in Ambon. Only in this way will our friendship be long preserved. If we live in the same house and conduct our housekeeping jointly, no good can be expected from that. Our tastes now differ; our culture is absolutely different. We also have our history; we have our own great men; we have our Pajajaran period and the ancient Majapahit — this last associated for you with disagreeable memories . . . Our duty is now determined by our birth, our way by the past, and our ideal by the knowledge of *KAWULO-GUSTI*, of the fact that we are now ruled (*Kawulo*) but were once rulers (*Gusti*).⁶

These Java-nationalists were passionately concerned with the pattern of Java's past. They were perhaps the first group to use this past as the basis for a national identity in the modern sense. They held fast to the essential cultural unity of the whole island of Java (with Madura and Bali), embracing the Sundanese on the grounds that the Javanese *babad* themselves traced the origin of the Majapahit tradition to Sunda (West Java). Soeriokoesoemo devoted a lengthy adulation to Sultan Agung, arguing that his mystical work *Sastro Gending* entitled him to a place among the great thinkers of the ages.⁷

Tjipto's response to this challenge was characteristically in terms of European rather than Indonesian history. The way in which the mediaeval

⁵ Soeriokoesoemo, 'Het Javaansche Vraagstuk', *Wederopbouw*, 1 (1918) p. 6.

⁶ Soeriokoesoemo, 'Gewijd aan mijn Kameraden in "Insulinde"', *Wederopbouw*, 1 (1918) p. 9. Abdurrahman Surjomihardjo kindly drew my attention to this source.

⁷ Soeriokoesoemo, 'Kangdjeng Sultan Agoeng als Wijsgeer', *Wederopbouw*, 2 (1919) pp. 2-12. The same article appeared in *Nederlandsch Indie, Oud en Nieuw*.

principalities of Holland, Friesland, and Utrecht had given way to the modern Netherlands nation, the similar development of nations in Germany and Italy, showed the inevitable path of progress 'India' must follow. The criteria of race or culture were less important for him than the material interests which bound the people of 'India' together. 'The Javanese will gradually be forced to abandon their *adatistiadat* (customs) and adopt habits which prevail among the Chinese, as among the Lapps, the Americans, or the Australians'. This process was already well advanced and could not be resisted.⁸

Another of the principal Indisch nationalists, Suwardi Suryaningrat [Ki Hadjar Dewantara], spiritually closer to the Java nationalists, was able to respond more sensitively to their arguments. He readily granted that Indisch nationalism had no cultural basis, but grew out of the purely negative factor of Dutch domination. The cultural case for Javanese nationalism, on the other hand, he found irresistible. Java formed a relatively homogeneous cultural whole, in contrast with the diversity everywhere else in the archipelago.

The presence of so many great *candi* monuments, of classical Javanese music which has reached a high development, of Javanese art in general, of literature, and of other remnants of civilisation which remind us of the glorious days of old, of the beautiful Javanese past, give us the right to speak of Javanese nationalism. They may be only remnants of an earlier civilisation, but precisely on that account the word is particularly appropriate. For whenever nationalism is an essential element in a popular movement that is always in a period of decline.⁹

This nationalism remained vague and uncertain for 'the so-called better educated . . . because Dutch schools have already turned us into little half-Dutchmen'. In the *vorstenlanden* (principalities), where the aristocracy remained fully Javanese, it was however a full-blooded and living reality:

What is our knowledge of Javanese history, who have learned so much in Dutch schools . . . in comparison with the knowledge of the Javanese rulers and nobles. There in the *vorstenlanden* they know what Java was, how Java was feared by foreigners, but also how Java has suffered. They know also what contempt . . . the Dutch have for the Javanese rulers, whose power and influence they have steadily confined . . . Javanese nationalism – that means a restoration of independent Java and thus, destruction of foreign rule.

⁸ Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo, 'Nationalisme Hindia dan hak hidupnya', late 1917, reproduced in M. Balfas, *Dr Tjipto Mangoenkoesoemo: Demokrat sedjati* (Jakarta, 1952), pp. 75-82. The original was presumably in Dutch.

⁹ Surya Ningrat, pp. 37-8.

One has only to exchange a few words with a Jogianese about Javanese history to know that there in the land which is still Javanese they continue to hope for the coming of Heru Cokro, the man who will free Java, named by King Joyoboyo in his book of prophecy.¹⁰

Suryaningrat sought to resolve this burgeoning contradiction between Javanese and Indisch nationalism by making a clear distinction between the cultural basis of the former and the political emphasis of the latter. Javanese nationalism was entitled to pursue its cultural objectives, but the political aspect of its goals were in reality an aspect of Indisch (i.e. anti-Dutch) nationalism, which required the greatest degree of common purpose to overcome Dutch divide-and-rule tactics.¹¹

The arguments of these founding fathers of Indisch nationalism were in practice less damaging to the Java nationalist ideal than its own internal contradictions. In their enthusiasm to state the historical case for the unity of Java, Soeriokoesoemo and his friends proved much more offensive to Sundanese opinion than the pragmatic politicians of Budi Utomo and the other parties.

Sundanese and Javan — even if the two do not stand on the same cultural level — are nevertheless one and the same culture which governs the people of Java. It is the culture of Pajajaran, which later took a higher flight in the time of Majapahit, in which today the people of Java consciously or unconsciously live . . .

The founders of our present culture were the Sundanese themselves in the time of Pajajaran. That there are now Sundanese who no longer recognize their own culture after this reached a higher development during the reign of Brawijaya, has its own explanation.¹²

Few Sundanese appear to have relished such an image as 'incomplete Javanese'. More in sorrow than in anger, a Sundanese correspondent asked how he could be expected to feel a pride in the Javanese heritage as it was presented by Soeriokoesoemo's *Wederopbouw*, and whether dwelling on the past was the right way to promote a sense of unity.¹³ Tactfully he refrained from instancing the 'Bubat War' so prominent in Sundanese memory, in which

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.43.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, *passim*, esp. pp. 47-8.

¹² Soeriokoesoemo, 'Waarom Javaansch- en Geen Indisch-Nationalism?', *Wederopbouw*, 1 (1918) pp. 80-81. The same idea was repeated in an anonymous article 'Cultuur', in *ibid.*, p. 112, with specific reference to Jaka Suruh, the Pajajaran prince who in the *babad* tradition is credited with the foundation of Majapahit.

¹³ R. Koesoema Soedjana, 'Aan mijn Javaansche broeders', in *Wederopbouw*, 1 (1918) pp.139-41.

the renowned Majapahit chancellor Gajah Mada first insulted and then annihilated a Sundanese royal delegation which had come to arrange a marriage.¹⁴

Religion provided another divisive element. As a Sumatran intellectual later pointed out, 'the current of Javanism . . . was in reality suffused with the spirit of *Hindu-Javanism*'.¹⁵ Again the historical enthusiasm of the young Java nationalists made explicit what remained an unspoken assumption for other Javanese aristocratic politicians. For Soerikoesoemo Arabian Islam was a form of imperialism no less pernicious than the Dutch. 'The beginning of this [foreign economic] domination was only made possible by the confusion which Islam introduced into the original conception of life of the Javanese people'. Islam forced the Javanese to abandon their art, and with that went all their economic incentives. The domination of a foreign holy place, Mecca, must give way to 'Java, the holy land of the Javanese'.¹⁶

The desire of these Java nationalists to revive and identify with a historical tradition still alive around them was not unique. Most of the peoples of the outer islands had still more immediate recollections of past heroes and vanished greatness, of a developing tradition thrown off course by Dutch conquest or control. Through its numbers, its relative homogeneity and its educational development Java alone was in a strong position to relate such a past to the needs of modern nationalism. Yet even for the Java nationalists history proved as much a source of distrust as of unity. The successful youth organization Jong Java did not attempt to pursue very far the intellectual currents set in motion by *Wederopbouw*.

Sumatran Nationalism

The example of Javanese nationalism, and the organizational successes of Jong Java in mobilizing politically inclined secondary and tertiary students, found a reaction among Sumatrans studying in Dutch schools in Java. In December 1917 a group of Sumatran (primarily Minangkabau) students at the STOVIA (Medical school) in Weltevreden established the Jong Sumatranen Bond (JSB), to unite all Sumatran students, promote Sumatran languages and culture, and 'to pose the inescapable demand to every member, that he call himself a Sumatran'.¹⁷ It did not claim, like many Javanese nationalists,

¹⁴ For a description of the Bubab war in Javanese sources see N.J. Krom, *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1931), pp. 402-4; and P.J. Zoetmulder, *Kalangwan: A survey of old-Javanese literature* (The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1974), pp. 423-6.

¹⁵ Dr M. Amir, 'Sampai dimana "Kemadjoen" kita?', *Poedjangga Baroe*, 6 (1938-39) p. 127.

¹⁶ Soerikoesoemo, 'Een beschouwing over de vormen der overheersching', *Wederopbouw*, 2 (1919) pp. 76-7.

¹⁷ Statutes of the JSB, in *Jong-Sumatra*, 1, i (1918) p. 5.

that Sumatra was already a nation or that its interests conflicted with Indisch nationalism. Its primary slogan was simply that unity is strength: 'Only a united Sumatra can fulfil Sumatra's greatness'.¹⁸ Nevertheless it shared with Javanese nationalism a concern with cultural identity as the essence of any nationalist movement. First among the activities listed in its constitution was 'the study and exercise of the history, languages, culture and art of Sumatra'.¹⁹

The task of establishing the historical identity of Sumatra was no easy one. Even if Minangkabaus were proportionally almost as dominant in JSB as were ethnic Javanese in Jong Java, they could not overlook the enormous differences in language, religion and *adat* within Sumatra. In enthusiasm and ingenuity young Sumatrans like Mohammad Amir, Muhammad Yamin and Bahder Djohan yielded nothing to the Java nationalists, but their efforts necessarily had a more artificial and academic character.

The most ambitious work was that of Amir, the second JSB chairman, who brought his very impressive scholarship to bear on the former greatness and dynamic of the Sumatran people. He was not content to show that Minangkabau had once been a great empire,²⁰ but went on to describe the peculiar genius of Sumatrans in history as seafarers, merchants, colonists (in Madagascar as well as Malaya), and as villagers (quoting Marsden) who knew how to construct an orderly *adat* system which approached a constitutional system of government. 'There we see a few glimpses from the economic past of the Sumatran people — examples of daring, vitality, and commercial spirit'. Like the Germanic peoples whose decline was deplored by Tacitus, the Sumatrans had demonstrated their potential to rise again to great things.²¹

Bahder Djohan, the next JSB chairman, led the movement into greater concern with economics and politics, which was reflected in turn in his reading of Sumatran history. He extolled the Padri movement in Minangkabau as a revolutionary force which could not accept the static society and the political disunity of its time.²² Finally, as Deliar Noer explained above, the early Yamin was throwing all his enthusiasm behind the Malay language as the symbol and vehicle of Sumatran (and ultimately Indonesian) unity.

Towards an Indonesian Identity

The evolution of Sumatran and Javanese nationalism had been in a similar direction. Having rejected Indisch nationalism during World War I, as alien and Dutch-inspired, each had sought a pattern of identity within more

¹⁸ Inaugural speech of the first chairman, Tengku Mansoer, in *Jong-Sumatra*, 1, i, p. 3. The words quoted were cited again as the slogan of the memorial volume after 5 years of the JSB.

¹⁹ Statutes of JSB., *loc cit.*

²⁰ Amir, 'Datoek Katoemangoengan', in *Jong-Sumatra* (Sept/Oct 1922).

²¹ Amir, 'Iets over de Sumatranen als zeevarend volk', *Gedenknummer Jong Sumatranen Bond 1917-1922*, pp. 36-43.

²² Bahder Djohan, 'De strijd der Padries', *Gedenknummer JSB*, pp. 58-65.

familiar limits. As denizens of ethnically mixed schools and cities, each had, however, felt obliged to go beyond the particular ethno-linguistic group, the *suku*, to the apparently more rational boundaries of whole islands. Having made this leap there was to be no turning back. The new attempts at cultural definition proved unconvincing, while the interests of younger thinkers in both Sumatran and Javanese movements turned to economic and political issues. This was the ground that united them. As attention shifted in the mid-twenties to the movement to amalgamate the regional youth groups into one Indonesian federation, interest in the more divisive questions of historical identity tended to wane.

Even the pure Javanese nationalists of *Wederopbouw* were gradually seduced by their own historical concerns into a renewed interest in a wider Indonesian unity. In 1919 the first volume of Fruin-Mees' *Geschiedenis van Java* was published in Batavia, to be translated before long into Malay. Designed for a wide Indonesian readership, it made available the results of scholarly research on pre-Muslim Java, in particular Brandes' editions of the *Pararaton* and the *Nagarakrtagama*. Its listing of the 'conquests' of Majapahit according to the *Nagarakrtagama* and its explicit map of 'the Majapahit empire' embracing all of contemporary Indonesia and Malaysia (a map incidentally copied by Yamin in his *Gadjah Mada*), made a deep impression.²³ The Javanese nationalists had talked of a lost greatness on the basis of the more recent *babad* and Dutch travel accounts, but never in such grandiose terms. Now *Wederopbouw* took a new line:

The history of our country from prehistoric times to the time of the philosopher-king of Mataram teaches us with undeniable wisdom that in every period Java has been the centre, the axle of the turning wheel, the *cakra-penggilingan* of the past, the present, and necessarily of the future . . .

All these islands, the Indonesia of today, have always existed as an unshakable unity, of which Java serves as the threshold of the southern ocean. The thrust towards unity has always gone out from Java, the cradle of every dynamic force in this archipelago.²⁴

Since *Gajah Mada* (not Douwes Dekker) was now seen as the great founder of the ideal of Indonesian unity, the erstwhile Javanese nationalists could not be left behind. Henceforth their task would be to join with their brother

²³ W. Fruin-Mees, *Geschiedenis van Java*, Deel I: Het Hindoeïjdsperk (Weltevreden, Commissie voor de Volkslectuur, 1919), esp. pp. 80-8. Compare maps at rear with the two maps in Muhammad Yamin, *Gadjah Mada: Pahlawan Persatuan Nusantara* (Jakarta, 1953), pp. 100-1. An enthusiastic review of Fruin-Mees by Soemarsono is in *Wederopbouw*, 3 (1920) pp. 83-7. See also Supomo, above p. 181.

²⁴ 'Het rijk van Gadjah Mada', in *Wederopbouw*, 3 (1920) pp. 5-6.

Indonesians in 'the fulfilment and ennobling of the unitary state, the empire of Gajah Mada, for our descendants'.²⁵

Such sentiments may have warmed few hearts outside Java, but they were of great importance in reorienting the historical concerns of Javanese nationalists in a direction compatible with Indonesian unity. Such concerns were in any case giving way to more immediate economic and political ones. As Suryaningrat had predicted in 1918,²⁶ Dutch imperial intransigence had the effect of driving Javanese nationalism and non-Javanese movements together. The problem of imperialism itself became more interesting to most Indonesian intellectuals than a continuing search for historical identity. Jong Java and Jong Sumatra were talking almost the same language by the mid-1920s, and their fusion became only a matter of time. The celebrated *sumpah pemuda* (youth oath) of Indonesian unity in 1928 and the establishment of the Partai Nasional Indonesia a year earlier marked the end of the identity debate with a victory for colonial boundaries.

With this critical issue settled there was a slackening of serious historical inquiry by nationalists. History had to become an armoury in the anti-colonial struggle, and certain stereotypes quickly developed as the most useful weapons. The 'unitary state' of Majapahit was among them, along with the other kingdoms of Java now increasingly well delineated in the textbooks. Fortunately for the geographical balance of the picture, the Sumatra-based empire of Sriwijaya was gradually emerging from the work of scholars like Krom, Ferrand, and Coedès in the 1920s.²⁷ Destined eventually to be coupled with Majapahit as the other great demonstration of historic Indonesian unity, Sriwijaya was initially handicapped by the obscurity of the sources.

A number of Indonesians of scholarly talents continued their study of particular cultural traditions, among whom Hussein Djajadiningrat, Noto Soeroto, and Poerbatjaraka were perhaps the most important.²⁸ They wrote in Dutch, for a predominantly Dutch audience, and had little to do with the development of a coherent historical dimension for the new Indonesian-nationalist idea. The young nationalists, on the other hand, wrote increasingly in Indonesian for Indonesians, and it was they who would mould the framework within which regional experience could somehow be related to national needs.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

²⁶ Surya Ningrat, p. 45.

²⁷ The fact that the earliest enthusiasts for the Sriwijaya empire wrote in French slowed their impact in Indonesia: G. Coedès 'Le royaume de Crivijaya', *BEFEO*, 28, vi (1918); and G. Ferrand, *L'empire Sumatranais de Crivijaya* (Paris, Imprimerie Nationale, 1922). It was primarily N.J. Krom who made the discoveries accessible to Indonesians, particularly in his popular *Hindoe-Javaansche Geschiedenis* ('s-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1931).

²⁸ The nearest to the popular and general in this group are the two works of R.M. Noto Soeroto, *Het Sultanaat Jogjakarto*, 1920 (also serialized in *Nederlandsch-Indie Oud en Nieuw*, and in *Jong-Java*, 1921); and *De Ontwikkeling van het Volk van Java*, 1931.

Sukarno himself was intensely interested in aspects of Indonesian history and had a major role in fashioning the nationalist orthodoxy. After graduating he briefly taught national history at Douwes Dekker's Ksatrian Institute, where he confesses to having 'never quite assimilated the theory that children must be instructed factually. My idea was to stir them passionately'²⁹ The clearest expression of the importance of history for the national struggle was his 1930 defence speech:

First: we show the people that they have a past, a glorious past;
 Second: we increase the people's consciousness that they have a present, a dark present;
 Third: we show the people the rays of the future, shining and clear, and the means to bring about that future full of promise . . .
 . . . The PNI knows that it is only this triad which can make a flower bloom, which will bring back to life the withered nationalism of the people.

We have a glorious past; we have a glittering future What Indonesian's national spirit will not live when hearing the greatness of the kingdoms of Melayu and Sriwijaya, the greatness of the first Mataram, the greatness of the time of Sindok and Erlangga and Kediri and Singasari and Majapahit and Pajajaran — the greatness too of Bintara, Banten, and Mataram under Sultan Agung! What Indonesian's heart will not sigh when he thinks of his flag which was once encountered and honoured as far as Madagascar, Persia, and China! But on the other hand, whose hope and faith will not live, that a people with *such* a great past, *must* have enough strength also to attain a glorious future.³⁰

In the interests of Indonesian unity it was appropriate to concentrate on the grandeur of these pre-colonial (and for the most part, pre-Islamic) kingdoms in a one-dimensional fashion, rather than to inquire further into their diverse social structures, belief systems, and economies. The question of national identity had in essence been resolved, as arising from common oppression by the Netherlands. Mohammad Ali has well described the needs which lay behind

²⁹ Sukarno: *An autobiography as told to Cindy Adams* (Hong Kong, Gunung Agung, 1966), p. 71. This experience appears to have been distinct from, and earlier than, Sukarno's period as a teacher in the *Nationale Middelbare School* headed by Sosro Kartono in Bandung, and reported on in 1927; S.L. van der Wal (ed), *Het Onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indië 1900-1940: een bronnenpublicatie* (Groningen, J.B. Wolters, 1963), p. 425.

³⁰ Sukarno, *Indonesia Menggugat. Pidato pembelaan Bung Karno dimuka hakim kolonial* (Jakarta, 1956) p. 118 (emphasis in original). For a modern discussion of 'the Ciriwijaya myth and the Majapahit myth' see G.J. Resink, *Indonesia's History between the Myths* (The Hague, Van Hoeve, 1968), pp. 21-2.

what he called 'the classic theory of Indonesian history', developed during the anti-colonial struggle but 'still regarded as legitimate and true until today'. The theory had to:

arouse the spirit of struggle *and* strengthen our self-respect as a people, and eventually to eliminate our inferiority complex towards the Dutch. Thus the primary *function* of Indonesian history has been to show that the Indonesian nation:

1. is a nation with the same standard and worth as *any* white nation;
2. is a nation with a history, which occupied a place of honour in our golden age;
3. that the summit of our greatness was equal to that of any nation;
4. that our fall and humiliation as a colonized nation was a *consequence* of the trickery, cunning, and deception of the Dutch and their divide and rule policy.³¹

One of the open questions within this nationalist format was the cause of the transition from glorious past to dark present. Dutch trickery was a constant factor, but something needed to be said about the fault to be put right and the grounds for hope in the future. The tendency of the Java-nationalists to see in Islam a force which had eroded the pristine strength and harmony of Majapahit was barely disguised in the writing of some later intellectuals. In the 1930s Hatta and Alisjahbana still found it necessary to condemn what they called the 'cultural nationalists' who wanted to revive Majapahit.³² For the Muslims this would not do, nor indeed for the Marxists who saw in Islam a progressive 'peoples' movement' against the tyranny of Brahmanic Majapahit.³³ Although the nationalists could not develop an orthodoxy on this difficult issue, Sukarno made a characteristic attempt at synthesis in what has been called his Marxist period. Indonesia lost its freedom in the 17th century, he argued, because it was in the midst of a transition from the 'old feudalism' of Hindu Majapahit to a 'new feudalism, Islamic feudalism, which was a little more democratic'. The conflict between these two forces created a 'fever' in Indonesian society which weakened it fatally against the foreign assault.³⁴

³¹ R. Moh. Ali, *Pengantar Ilmu Sedjarah Indonesia* (Jakarta, Bhratara, 1963) pp. 114-15 (emphasis in original).

³² Hatta, 'Kearah Indonesia merdeka' (1932), and 'Krisis dunia dan nasib rakyat Indonesia' (1932), in *Kumpulan Karangan* (Jakarta, 1953) Vol. I, pp. 79, 130; Takdir Alisjahbana, 'Menuju masyarakat dan kebudayaan baru' (1935), in Achdiat K. Miharja (ed.), *Polemik Kebudayaan* (Jakarta, Balai Pustaka, 1954) pp. 14-15.

³³ 'S. Dingley' [Iwa Kusuma Sumantri], *The Peasants' Movement in Indonesia* (Moscow, International Agrarian Institute, n.d. [1926?]), p. 11.

³⁴ Sukarno, *Mentjapai Indonesia Merdeka* (1933) (Jakarta, n.d.) p. 10.

A more persuasive argument at a popular level, particularly in the period before 1926, was that freedom had been lost through disunity, and would be regained by unity.³⁵ Here the nationalists of the 1920s were continuing, in terms more attractive to the urban elite, the theme of unity which had been the great popular message of Sarekat Islam in its decade as a mass movement. Throughout Java, Sumatra, and Sulawesi a new gospel had been preached that *sepakat* (accord), *sama rasa* (feeling-as-one, or brotherhood), and solidarity were the secret of strength. 'If we are *sepakat* we are already numerous, and whatever we want to achieve will take place'.³⁶ If unity for urban nationalists meant modern organizations and parties, to the rural mass it had taken the form of oaths of mutual support and a flowering of semi-secret societies loosely linked to Sarekat Islam. Here is one possible point of contact between urban elite (necessarily the subject of this paper) and mass consciousness. A sense of rapid progress on the basis of unity appeared to take root widely in the decade before 1926.

The Hero Phenomenon

The forms taken by the new nationalist past cannot of course be understood in isolation from Dutch writing of the 1920s and 30s to which nationalists were exposed. The earliest Dutch-educated Indonesians suffered in the ELS and HBS a syllabus designed purely for Dutch students; they learned much about Dutch history and almost nothing about Indonesian. Attempts to alter this situation began during World War I, and resulted in the introduction of the subject 'Netherlands Indies history', and eventually the establishment in Surakarta in 1926 of the so-called 'Oosters-letterkundig' high school, for an Indisch-centred study of the humanities. For Dutch policy-makers an incentive for this trend was the belief that 'the best guarantee against revolutionary tendencies lies in . . . individuals educated as harmoniously as possible, i.e. according to their own, national, character'.³⁷ While a few nationalists, like Tjipto and Takdir Alisjahbana, confirmed this analysis by their preference for a thoroughly Western education, a growing majority echoed Dr Radjiman's demand in the Volksraad that Indisch history be taught to all students.³⁸

³⁵ An explicit elaboration of this theme is 'Pergerakan kita' by 'Indonesier' in *Soeloeh Indonesia*, 1 (1926). Also Sukarno's 1945 introduction to Yamin, *Sedjarah Peperangan Dipanegara* (Jakarta, 1950) pp. 5-6.

³⁶ Speech of Sarekat Islam propagandist Abdoelmanap in rural Aceh, 1920, cited in my 'Heaven's will and man's fault: the rise of the West as a Southeast Asian dilemma' (6th Flinders University Asian Studies Lecture, 1975) p. 35, where this theme is discussed at greater length. The same argument is emphasised in 'Dari hal solidariteit, atau "satoe boeat semoea, semoea boeat satoe"', in Sarekat Islam's *Oetoesan Hindia* (18 May 1914).

³⁷ Nota Van der Plas, 7 December 1927, in S.L. van der Wal (ed.), *Het Onderwijsbeleid in Nederlands-Indië, 1900-1942. Een bronnenpublicatie* (Groningen, Wolters, 1963) p.438.

³⁸ Radjiman speech of 27 June 1918, cited in Akira Nagazumi, *The Dawn of Indonesian Nationalism: The early years of Budi Utomo, 1908-1918* (Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economics, 1972) pp. 142-3.

The results of this growing focus on Netherlands Indian history for Indonesian students were the by now familiar textbook stereotypes. As G.J. Resink has already made clear,³⁹ the textbooks (first Fruin-Mees, then Eijkman & Stapel) and the more scholarly work which lay behind them (N.J. Krom, Stapel, Colenbrander) presented a Java-centred pre-European history focused on a mighty Majapahit, and an outrageously Dutch-centred modern history focused almost exclusively on the VOC and the Netherlands Indies state. The Indonesian student learned virtually nothing of the history, or indeed the existence, of the independent political life of the archipelago after 1600, let alone of Indonesian social history. The first two elements of Sukarno's triad were confirmed in the Dutch textbooks. After the 'glorious past' of Majapahit, there was for the Indonesian side of the story apparently 350 years of defeat and humiliation. Individual Indonesians fitted into this textbook stereotype as obstacles or antagonists to the steady rise of Dutch power. 'Care is taken that they [Indonesian students] understand very well who and what Diponegoro, Surapati, Trunoyoyo, Sultan Agung of Mataram, Abdul Fatah of Bantam, Tuanku of Rentjeh, Teuku Umar . . . were; for the child these personalities are nothing but the greatest villains, breakers of their word, rebels, traitors against the Company'.⁴⁰

For the nationalist stereotype the positive interest in post-1600 Indonesian history became this roll-call of enemies of the Dutch as recorded in the colonial text-books. They were not necessarily the folk heroes whose names remained vivid in the oral traditions and holy graves of various regions. Those who emerged first into the pantheon were invariably those who had excited enough interest on the part of Dutch writers to appear as real characters for their Dutch-educated Indonesian successors. Surapati and Dipanagara were already in this category before World War I,⁴¹ but by the 1930s the established trinity had become Dipanagara, Tuanku Imam Bonjol, and Teuku Uma — representing the three great nineteenth century wars the Dutch fought in the Archipelago.⁴²

Fanon points out that in colonized Africa too the leaders of the earlier anti-colonial resistance 'spring again to life with peculiar intensity in the period which comes directly before action'.⁴³ In multi-ethnic Indonesia however the *pahlawan* (heroes) quickly assumed an additional role beyond that

³⁹ Resink, esp. pp. 15-25, 151-69.

⁴⁰ 'Kantteekeningen', by 'Sumatraantje', in *Jong-Sumatra*, 9 (1926). See also Roeslan Abdulgani, *Penggunaan Ilmu Sedjarah* (Bandung, n.d. [1963]) pp. 19-20; and Yamin, cited by Deliar Noer in this volume.

⁴¹ Abdul Moeis, *Surapati* (Batavia, 1905). Balfas, *Tjipto*, pp. 60-4, cites a 1913 speech of Tjipto in honour of Dipanagara, largely based on Van der Kerup's *BKI* analysis of him as a 'Hamlet type'.

⁴² Sukarno by 1945 called them *pahlawan tiga-sekawan*. See Yamin, *Sedjarah*, p. 5; *ibid.*, p. 118.

⁴³ Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1967) p. 54.

of inspiring sacrificial patriotism. Through the anti-Dutch struggle of the *pahlawan* each people in the Archipelago found a formula to relate its own unique experience of the past with the new nationalist identity. Nationalist spokesmen increasingly selected their heroes with an eye to a broad geographical representation, a factor which appeared to become paramount when 'Guided Democracy' later made the *pahlawan* status an official one.⁴⁴

The relationship between popular memory at the local level and the new nationalist format can be seen in the case of Aceh, liberally endowed with *pahlawan* of the approved type but scarcely represented in the pre-war nationalist movement. In Dutch textbook treatments of their colonial wars, the interest focused on the 'happy ending', when the problem was solved, resistance overcome, and the *pax Neerlandica* definitively established. The so-called 'klein Stapel', for example, mentions only the last of the great Padri leaders in West Sumatra, Tuanku Imam Bonjol. It cites only three Acehnese in its chapter on the Aceh War, the two (Sultan Daud and Panglima Polem) whose surrender in 1903 was declared by the Dutch to be the end of the war, and Teuku Uma, whose change of sides in 1896 provoked the Dutch into adopting their eventually successful aggressive policy.⁴⁵ Polem later became a pillar of the colonial regime in Aceh and his role as a resistance leader was therefore exaggerated by many Dutch writers. But it was Uma who gripped the attention of both Dutch and nationalist spokesmen, not only because of his motives in so frequently changing sides, and his violent death, but also the romantic interest provided by his European hostage Mrs Hansen, and his militant wife Cut Nyak Din (who attracted an article in *De Gids* in 1918 and a full romantic biography by Mevr. Szekely-Lulofs in 1948). Despite his great military services to the Dutch, and the lack of real popular interest in him in Aceh (except perhaps in his own west coast), Uma became accepted by the mid-1920s as the symbol of the Aceh War and one of the big three Indonesian *pahlawan*.

It was not until the late 1930s that Acehnese themselves were seriously affected by the new nationalist mythology. Some were grateful enough to see they had a place in it to accept the primacy of Teuku Uma. A Marxist journalist long resident in Aceh, Xarim M.S., wrote a popular biography of Uma

⁴⁴ Successive editions of Tamar Djaya, *Pusaka Indonesia* (Bukittinggi, 1940), provide an indication of the changing pantheon. The earliest edition I have seen, the third (Bandung, Kolff, 1951) is still limited to Java and Sumatra. It includes three Acehnese anti-Dutch fighters and the standard representatives of Java (Dipangara), Madura (Trunajaya), Minangkabau and Toba. A very personal inclusion of the author was the Mandailing hero Raja Gadombang, even though he allied with the Dutch against the Minangkabau Padris.

⁴⁵ F.W. Stapel, *Geschiedenis van Nederlandsch-Indië* (Amsterdam, Meulenhoff, 1930) pp. 306-19.

in 1939 which aroused much local interest. Almost immediately, however, the talented young Acehnese writer Teungku Ismail Jakub, educated in the Islamic rather than the Dutch tradition, began to explain in the Indonesian press that it was Teungku Cik di Tiro who was regarded by the majority of Acehnese as the great hero and inspiration for resistance.⁴⁶ Even Ismail Jakub was undoubtedly influenced by the respectability and the hard data given to the Cik di Tiro memory by the publication in 1938 of Zentgraaf's *Atjeh*, the first Dutch work to do partial justice to the great *ulama* and his sons. Yet Jakub correctly assessed both the relative importance of Tiro in the Acehnese war effort and the ability of his memory to continue to inspire Acehnese. The revolution which began in 1945 was declared by Acehnese *ulama* to be 'a continuation of the former struggle in Aceh which was led by the late Teungku Cik di Tiro',⁴⁷ and an important 'peoples' army' was named after him. When it became necessary to find uncontroversial names for Aceh's army division and university after 1950, however, more remote seventeenth century heroes were selected in Sultan Iskandar Muda and the great Muslim mystic Abdul Rauf (popularly known as Syiah Kuala). Though scarcely part of the early nationalist pantheon at all, these were indeed the names universally revered in Acehnese society.

Nationalist Orthodoxy and Its Rivals

By the end of Dutch rule the shape of the new nationalist past had been clearly drawn. Even leaving out of account the dominant colonial school, however, it still had to compete with a number of rival Indonesian perceptions. The Westernising intellectuals typified by Takdir Alisjahbana made no secret of their conviction that the spirit of the new Indonesia had absolutely nothing to do with Sriwijaya and Majapahit, and not much with the later *pahlawan*.⁴⁸ The only schools of thought which began to offer coherent alternative perceptions to the nationalists, however, were the Islamic and the Marxist. Both were firmly internationalist, seeing the fate of Indonesia tied up in a much larger historical pattern; both were sceptical of the merits of the Hindu kingdoms; both were inspired by a sense of progress, the glorious fulfilment of which was nevertheless conditional on the application and rationality of the human actors.

⁴⁶ 'Siapa orang besar dari Atjeh? — Teungku Tjih' di Tiro atau T. Oemar', in *Pandji Islam* (Medan) (7 March 1940), and the articles there cited; also Amelz, 'Teungku Tjihik di Tiro', *Penjedar* (Medan) (9 January 1941). Ismail Jakub's book, *Tengku Tjihik di Tiro (Muhammad Saman)* was first published in Sumatra in 1943, and a historical novel by Amelz about Tiro and Uma, *Korban Perdjoeangan*, was advertised in 1941. Despite Amelz's preference for Tiro, it was about Uma that he was commissioned to write for a post-war Jakarta series of hero-biographies: Amelz, *Teku Umar dan Tjut Nja Din* (Jakarta, 1952).

⁴⁷ Maklumat 15 October 1945, in *Modal Revolusi 45* (Kutaraja, 1960), p. 61.

⁴⁸ See Supomo, above p. 183.

Muslim spokesmen were preoccupied with the problem of why the whole Islamic world had fallen from greatness into defeat and humiliation at the hands of the infidel West. The answers provided for Egypt, the Arab world, and India were equally true for Indonesia – disunity, faithlessness, indolence, corruption, and a failure to use God-given intelligence. A new confidence in Islamic resurgence nevertheless aroused a passionate wave of hope throughout the Archipelago, perhaps earlier in Java (c.1912-20) than in Minangkabau (1920s) or Aceh (1930s).⁴⁹

The great fascination of Marxist historiography for Indonesians, as for Vietnamese, was its coherent explanation of the reasons for the rise of European capitalism and imperialism, and its assurance that their fall was equally inevitable. Although Asian Marxists were not content to wait for the cataclysm to take place in Europe,⁵⁰ there was an inherent Eurocentrism in their analysis. Tan Malaka and Hatta in particular exhibited a lively interest in European history, and in common with most Marxist writers took a relatively negative view of Indonesia's past. Tan Malaka's early writing insisted that Indonesia had never been free, having been enslaved by one group of foreign bandits after another. 'The true Indonesian nation does not yet have a history of its own except one of slavery . . . The history of the Indonesian nation will first begin when it is freed from imperialist oppression.'⁵¹

The Hindu kingdoms became stereotyped as 'feudal' regimes where all land was owned by a small ruling class which exploited a population of serfs for temple-building, warfare, and an agricultural surplus.⁵² Hatta's opposite picture of a democratic, self-regulating traditional village, exemplified of course by Minangkabau,⁵³ aroused little interest among more doctrinaire Marxists. On the other hand the elimination of an Indonesian bourgeoisie by seventeenth

⁴⁹ See for example *Djedjak Langkah Hadji A. Salim* (Jakarta, Tintamas, 1954) esp. pp. 3-22; H.O.S. Tjokroaminoto, *Islam dan Sosialisme* (written 1924, reprinted Jakarta, 1963) pp. 95-104; Taufik Abdullah, *Schools and Politics: the kaum muda movement in West Sumatra (1927-1933)* (Ithaca, Cornell Modern Indonesia Project, 1971) p. 60; James Siegel, *The Rope of God* (Berkeley, California, 1969) pp. 115-130; Sjakieb Arsalan, *Mengapa Kaum Muslimin Mundur, dan mengapa kaum selain mereka maju* (trans. Moenawar Chalil) (Jakarta, Bulan Bintang, 1954) – a work prompted by a question from Indonesia in the 1920s asking the reason for Islamic decline.

⁵⁰ For example Tan Malaka, *Menuju Republik Indonesia* (1925) (Jakarta, 1962) p. 21.

⁵¹ Tan Malaka, *Massa-Actie* (1926) as cited in R. Moh. Ali, p. 145.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 145-6; 'S. Dingley' [Iwa Kusuma Sumantri], 1926, pp. 10-11. In a later period Aidit's *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* (Jakarta, Pamburuan, 1958) pp. 14-23, took dogmatism to more ingenious lengths, preceding this 'feudal' period in Indonesia with a 'slave society' before the Christian era.

⁵³ Hatta, 'Demokrasi asli Indonesia dan kedaulatan rakyat' (1932) and 'Collectivisme tua dan baru' (1933), in *Kumpulan Karangan*, I, pp. 81-4, 90-3. To the best of my knowledge it is only in the work of the foreign Marxists, S.J. Rutgers and A. Huber, *Indonesie* (Amsterdam, Pegasus, 1937) that these opposing stereotypes were to some degree reconciled.

century Dutch intervention was a point Marxist historians were the first to see.⁵⁴ Thereafter the purely Indonesian side of the story held little interest. The struggles of the anti-Dutch *pahlawan* were sometimes dignified as 'peasant revolts', though without appropriate class leadership and tactics they had been destined to fail.

Some aspects of this Marxist analysis quickly found their way into the nationalist format, including the universal identification of monarchy with 'feudalism', and the economic motivation for imperialism. For the most part, however, it was the Muslims and Marxists who fell under the influence of the nationalists. For during the Japanese occupation of Indonesia the nationalist perception was suddenly transformed from one of several struggling counter-myths (colonial historiography still having an overwhelmingly dominant position) into a new orthodoxy.

A new picture of the past was suddenly in great demand after 1942 to replace proscribed Dutch text-books, myths, and heroes. The Marxists and Westernizers were temporarily also barred from the ring, whereas nationalist politicians and journalists were concentrated by the Japanese in precisely the 'consciousness-raising' areas of the media and the *sendenhan* (propaganda service). Muhammad Yamin rose quickly to become the senior Indonesian in the propaganda service in Java, the key position to promote and develop his view of Majapahit as the great unifier of Indonesia and of the anti-Dutch fighters as the bearers of national dignity. There was a spate of new writing, including Yamin's own work⁵⁵ and Sanusi Pane's standard national history. In each region the local *sendenhan* devoted itself to popularizing the anti-Dutch struggle through drama as well as speeches and pamphlets. In Aceh it sponsored a competition for the best historical novel on an anti-Dutch theme.⁵⁶ As Dutch street names gave way to Indonesian ones the pantheon of *pahlawan* for the first time received official sanction. Public speeches constantly drove home the myth of three and a half centuries of Dutch rule, often in order to draw the contrast with three and a half years of Japanese achievement.

Much of this writing was creative and perceptive. No one could doubt the value of its achievement, in conveying the importance and the content of the new national identity to a much wider spectrum of the population than ever before. Yet this newly dominant perception could not free itself from the inhibitions with which it had begun. Too close a concern with the

⁵⁴ For example Tan Malaka, *Menuju*, pp. 21-6; This was a point also much stressed by Sukarno in *Indonesia Menggugat*, pp. 33-67, 139-43, and 'Swadeshi dan Massa-Aski di Indonesia' (1932) in *Dibawah Bendera Revolusi* (Jakarta, 1963) Vol. I, pp. 121-57.

⁵⁵ Yamin, *Sedjarah* and *Gadjah Mada*.

⁵⁶ *Atjeh Sinbun* (12 April 1944). The contest was won by Surya (pseud. A. Miala), *Leburnja Keraton Atjeh*. The varied repertoire of the Atjeh *Gekidan* (drama group) is indicated in *Atjeh Sinbun* (4 April 1944) and *Sumatra Sinbun* (26 April 1943).

remembered past of the various Indonesian peoples always threatened to endanger rather than confirm the newly defined unity. The historical orthodoxy therefore acquired a somewhat brittle quality which did not invite too rich an elaboration. Its central elements, to repeat, were great Hindu kingdoms bringing political unity to the archipelago, followed by 350 years of Dutch oppression dignified by the resistance at some time or another of each Indonesian region and people. The needs of this orthodoxy allowed little room for historical judgement or even causation, except when discussing the Dutch. Sanusi Pane managed to exonerate both Amangkurat I for massacring thousands of *ulama* and Sultan Iskandar Muda for murdering his own son.⁵⁷ Like Sriwijaya and Majapahit these heroes 'existed, and were great — that was enough'.⁵⁸

Long after independence was achieved the same inhibitions appeared to restrict the range of historical writing in Indonesian. Mohammad Ali could still complain in 1963 that 'the structure and contents of 1001 Indonesian history books are all drearily the same'.⁵⁹ The iconoclasm of the Indonesian revolution brought only a short-lived rethinking of history. Mohammad Ali's own *Perjuangan Feodal Indonesia* (written in 1948 though not published until 1952) was perhaps the most ambitious attempt of that revolutionary period to view the past in social rather than purely anti-colonial terms — condemning Sultan Agung, for example, for his destruction of the most progressive elements in Indonesian society. The 1950s and 60s brought a return to the sense of the 20s and 30s, that historical enquiry should remain within certain limits in the interests of national identity. Only with the emergence of a new generation of professional historians, with different responsibilities towards the past, is a roomier national history at last being written.

⁵⁷ Sanusi Pane, *Sedjarah Indonesia* (Jakarta, 1965) pp. 186, 206, 265n 11.

⁵⁸ R. Moh. Ali, p. 117.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 107. Striking examples of these inhibitions against further enquiry were Ruslan Abdulgani, *Penggunaan Ilmu Sedjarah* (Bandung, n.d. [1963]), and Yamin (see Deliar Noer, above pp. 258-9).

LOCAL HISTORIANS AND THE WRITING OF MALAYSIAN HISTORY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Khoo Kay Kim

Until comparatively recently, Malay historiography has been viewed rather unfavourably by historians. Part of the problem stems from the absence of a specific indigenous term for 'history'. Although the word *sejarah* (now the official term for history) had long existed in Malay vocabulary, *hikayat* was more widely used. Many historical works tended to focus on the genealogies of ruling families – these were called *salasilah*. When history appeared in verse form, it was also known as *syair*.

The term *hikayat* indeed tends to imply that, in traditional Malay thinking, history was not punctiliously distinguished from literature. It has been remarked that:

Literature in the Malay Nusantara concept includes everything that uses words or languages in a creative way, creative in a very broad sense. There is no boundary between mythical fiction and a historical description for example, and there is sometimes no boundary between an enumeration of the adat law and a love poem. Some of the most serious theosophical expositions have been put into beautiful poetry, in the *syair* form, because poetry is much more easily retained by memory and much more pleasant to hear.¹

It was literature, presumably, or more specifically stories of romance and heroism told in a grandiose and magniloquent style, which had greatest appeal in earlier times. In fact, historical works as they are understood today, with the emphasis on accurate dates and objective truth, were conspicuously absent before the eighteenth century – at least no extant text has been discovered. Thereafter, however, Malay historiography began to turn away from the world of designed fiction to the world of reality, although the emphasis on literary style remained; also, not infrequently, when the distant past had to be discussed the authors did not hesitate to fall back on myths and legends.

Malay historiography between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries can no longer be dismissed as mere collections of myths and legends. A great deal of attention has already been focused on these writings by modern

¹ Ismail Hussein, *The Study of Traditional Malay Literature with a Selected Bibliography* (Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1974) p. 12.

scholars and they have been found to be reliable accounts of the past.² Although many of the authors of these earlier Malay histories remain unknown, sufficient evidence exists to justify the conclusion that the traditional historians were court scribes, protocol officers or persons of rank including royalty. In a society where the ruling elite controlled all aspects of life, a historian could hardly function independent of royal sanction. Moreover, history was important because it was generally used to substantiate a particular claim. This explains too the preponderance of genealogical history. No historical work, in effect, neglected the genealogy of the relevant ruling family. Malay historiography up to the end of the nineteenth century was very much elitist in conception and political in tone. It was *istana* (palace) orientated and often written upon the *titah* (command) of the ruler.

The early twentieth century witnessed no important departure from traditional practices. Of the five works known to have been completed between 1900 and World War I, the first two – *Syair Abu Bakar*³ and *Hikayat Pahang*⁴ were written in Pahang. The authorship of these two works is unknown. Both are primarily concerned with nineteenth century history. The *syair* sings the praises of Johor's famous ruler, Sultan Abu Bakar, but also devotes some space to the civil war in Pahang (1857-1863) which led to the ascendancy of Wan Ahmad.⁵ Sultan Abu Bakar was also the subject of yet another work – *Hikayat Johor dan Tawarikh Al Marhum Sultan Abu Bakar*.⁶ This consists of two separate parts, the first dealing with Johor history and the other with Abu Bakar. Contemporaneous with this work is the *Salasilah atau Tarekh Kerja-an Kedah*, written in Alor Star.⁷ It is the first known history in Malay to be published in the romanized script. The last known work of the period – *Hikayat Seri Kelantan* – was completed in 1914 but never published.⁸

² See Ismail Hussein, 'Hikayat Negeri Johor', *Dewan Bahasa*, 7, viii (1963); V. Matheson, 'The Tuhfat al-Nafis: Structure and Sources' *BKI*, 127 (1971); E.U. Kratz, *Peringatan Sejarah Negeri Johor* (Wiesbaden, 1973); L.Y. Andaya, *The Kingdom of Johor 1641-1728* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1975) pp. 339-40. For an analysis of the *Misa Melayu*, a contemporary account of 18th century Perak, believed to have been written by Raja Chulan, see B. Andaya, 'Perak, The Abode of Grace, A Study of An Eighteenth Century Malay State' (Ph.D. thesis, Cornell, 1975), chap. IV and app. A.

³ See Ismail Hussein, 'Dokumentasi: Syair Sultan Abu Bakar', *Dewan Bahasa*, 20, v (1976).

⁴ Completed in 1909 but there is no information as to when it was published. This work was used rather extensively by W. Linehan for his 'A History of Pahang', *JMBRAS*, 14, ii (1936).

⁵ Wan Ahmad defeated his brother (Wan Mutahir) and his nephew (Wan Korish) in the civil war and in 1863 became Bendahara of Pahang. He was proclaimed Sultan in 1881.

⁶ See bibliographical appendix.

⁷ See bibliographical appendix.

⁸ See Mohd. Taib Osman, 'Hikayat Seri Kelantan' (M.A. thesis, University of Malaya, 1961).

All these works bear a close similarity to Malay historiography before the twentieth century in literary style, and they too deal mainly with royal lineages and political developments, including, with the exception of the *Hikayat Seri Kelantan*, the advent of British influence or administration. There are, nevertheless, a few points worthy of notice. While the authors continued to perpetuate the use of the term *hikayat*, the comparatively new term *tawarikh* and its variant form *tarekh*,⁹ both of Arabic derivation, are introduced. If nothing else, this indicates greater consciousness of the importance of dates in historical writing. As in the past all the three known authors were persons of high social standing. Capt. Haji Muhammad Said bin Haji Sulaiman, author of *Hikayat Johor*, was educated in both Malay and English and served in the Johor administrative service, rising to the rank of Personal Secretary to Sultan Ibrahim.¹⁰ He was also a member of the Johor Volunteer Forces,¹¹ eventually holding the rank of Major. Like earlier historians, he was equally renowned for his knowledge of the Malay language and for his literary accomplishment. His subjects were not confined to Johor but included England and Japan.¹² Wan Yahya bin Wan Muhammad Taib, who wrote the *Salasilah atau Tarekh Kerja-an Kedah*, was descended from a family which had held the title of *temenggung*. He himself held a rather high position in the Kedah administrative service, having been District Officer of Kulim in the early twentieth century, and, after the establishment of the Advisory system in 1909, Superintendent of Chandu Monopoly and Liquor Revenue as well as Acting Harbour Master and Judge of the Court of Appeal.¹³ The *Hikayat Seri Kelantan* was written by Haji Nik Mahmud bin Haji Wan Ismail,¹⁴ who was the son of a former Judge of the religious court in Kelantan. In 1904 Haji Nik Mahmud was a clerk in the state administrative service and rose eventually to hold the post of Chief Minister or *Datuk Perdana Menteri Paduka Raja*.¹⁵

⁹ Usually spelt *tarikh*; it also means 'date'.

¹⁰ For a useful biography of Muhammad Said, see M.A. Fawzi Mohd. Basri, 'Major Datuk Haji Mohd. Said b. Haji Sulaiman: Peranan dan Karyanya dalam Sejarah Persuratan dan Kesusasteraan Melayu Moden', *Humanisma*, 1 (1971/72).

¹¹ First founded in 1885 and known as the Johor Military Forces, the name was changed to Johor Volunteer Forces in 1905.

¹² His earlier work, published between 1904-1905, was known as the *Hikayat Queen Victoria*. In later years, he also wrote *Ringkasan Tawarikh Nippon* and *Tawarikh England*. I have not been able to ascertain when these works were published.

¹³ Wan Yahya bin Wan Muhammad Taib, *Salasilah atau Tarekh Kerja-an Kedah* (Penang, 1911), pp. 18, 23.

¹⁴ For a brief biography, see W.R. Roff, 'The Origin and Early Years of the Majlis Ugama' in W.R. Roff (ed.), *Kelantan: Religion Society and Politics in a Malay State* (Kuala Lumpur, O.U.P., 1974) p. 125.

¹⁵ It may be added that he was the father of the late Tan Sri Nik Ahmed Kamil, Speaker of the Malaysian House of Representatives (1974-77).

A significant development occurred in 1918 when in the Malay College in Melaka (a teacher training institute) the subject *tawarikh* (history) was introduced for the first time. Earlier *Sejarah dan Hikayat* had been part of the curriculum, but the emphasis had been on literature, since R.J. Wilkinson, who had been mainly responsible for the founding of the College in 1900, personally encouraged the study of indigenous literature.¹⁶ Also in 1918, R.O. Winstedt and Daing Abdul Hamid bin Tengku Muhammad Salleh of Selangor produced the *Kitab Tawarikh Melayu* (The Book of Malay History), which undoubtedly was meant to be used as a text in Malay schools. It was therefore at the end of World War I that *tawarikh* was officially designated as the Malay term for History; it was to be distinguished from stories of romance and heroic deeds. The greater attention paid to the formal teaching of history meant that history had been brought to the level of the populace. It prompted one writer, years later, to remark in the *Majallah Guru* (March 1934):

From early times until now, the Malay language has not been the storehouse of great and superior thoughts for all its readers; there is no book which is composed of a particular branch of education or knowledge (apart from the Jawi 'texts' whose language is almost devoid of vitality) and there is no book which contains profound politics or the intellectual heritage of erudite authors and no story or history book from which wisdom may be derived. In fact, Malays have only since the last ten years heard the word 'tarikh' meaning 'history' and understood its meaning and purpose. Before that every story or hikayat about fairies and the like was believed to be true.¹⁷

The above passage reveals only too clearly how little access, as a whole, society had to historical works before the 1920s. History as a record of factual happenings had long been valued among members of the higher echelon of society; it was only after the introduction of secular education that it found meaning among the population at large.

The 1920s were an important turning-point in Malay literary history. The short story, the novel, and modern poetry (known as *sajak* as distinct from *syair*) in succession found popularity among the educated. The growth of secular Malay schools had also produced a new class of literati in the Peninsula. However, although modern education gave rise to a better understanding of history, there was no marked transformation in Malay historiography. Until the

¹⁶ See Ramlah Adam, 'Maktab Melayu Melaka' (B.A. academic exercise, Dept of History, University of Malaya, 1972) pp. 5-6, 14, 19-20.

¹⁷ See Zabadah Awang Ngah (ed.), *Renongan: Antologi Esei Melayu dalam Tahun 1924-1941* (Kuala Lumpur, 1964) pp. 62-3.

eve of World War II, the majority of historical works continued to focus on the royal families; several of them were never published, having obviously been written for royal consumption. Most of the authors were inspired to write as a result of fervent loyalty and warm attachment to the ruling elite. In all it is possible to ascertain that, in the twenties and thirties, no less than eight works were written on some aspect of state history,¹⁸ and three in the form of biography of which one was a *syair*.¹⁹ Some of the pre-World War I writers continued to be active, in particular Haji Nik Mahmud²⁰ and Major Haji Muhammad Said bin Haji Sulaiman. The latter was especially prolific. In 1935, he revived the Johor Malay Language Society (known as the *Pakatan Belajar-Mengajar Pengetahuan Bahasa*) first founded in 1888, and renamed it 'The Royal Society of Malay Literature of Johore' (*Pakatan Bahasa Melayu Persuratan Buku Diraja*). And as the editor of its journal, *Peredar*, he wrote profusely on history, language, travel and culture. Altogether twenty-five numbers of *Peredar* were produced between 1935-1940. Apart from his writings in *Peredar*, Muhammad Said also wrote on religion and composed *syair*.²¹

The press too, at this juncture, began to show an interest in history. As early as 1919, Winstedt was criticized in *Pengasuh*²² by a certain Muhammad Al-Johori (very likely a pen-name, but the indication is that the writer was a Johor Malay) for some of his views on the history of Malay culture. A talk given by Winstedt had earlier been reported in the same periodical, putting forward the view that Malay culture had its origin in India and that even Islam came via India. Muhammad claimed that if there was similarity between Indian culture and Malay culture, it was coincidental. On the subject of the advent of Islam, Muhammad argued that it was more likely that the Arabs from Hadramaut brought Islam to the Malay world.²³

¹⁸ Osman bin Yusof, 'Ringkasan Tarikh Kelantan' (unpublished); Muhammad Hassan bin Dato' Kerani Muhammad Arshad, *Al-Tarikh Salasilah Negeri Kedah* (Penang, 1928); Sri Nara Wangsa Mohd. Ali bin Abdul Rahim, 'Riwayat Negeri Trengganu' (unpublished, date of completion unknown; used by M.C.ff.Sheppard in his 'A Short History of Trengganu', *JMBRAS*, 22, iii (1949); Abdul Samad bin Ahmad (ed.), *Kenang-Kenangan Selangor* (Klang, 1937); Daing Abdul Hamid, *Sentosa Ketakhtaan Selangor* (Klang, 1938); Wan Abdul Karim bin Wan Abdul Hamid, *Tawarikh Raja-Raja dan Adat Istiadat Zaman Purbakala Negeri Perak Darul Ridzuan* (Kuala Kangsar, [1934]); Dato' Haji Ramly Abdullah, *Orang-Orang Melayu Perak Darul Ridzuan daripada Zaman Purbakala* (Taiping, 1935); Haji Nik Mahmud bin Haji Ismail, *Ringkasan Cetera Kelantan* (Kota Bharu, 1934).

¹⁹ Muhammad bin Haji Alias, *Tarikh Dato' Bentara Luar* (Johor Bahru, 1928). The Dato' Bentara Luar was one of the high-ranking chiefs in modern Johor. The other two works were: Mohd. Ali bin Abu Bakar, 'Tarikh Al-Marhum Sultan Zainal III' (unpublished, date of completion unknown but obviously after 1918 the year of Sultan Zainal Abidin's demise); Tengku Dalam, *Syair Tawarikh Zainal Abidin Yang Ketiga* (Singapore, [1936]).

²⁰ See n. 18; he also wrote *Kitab Geografi dan Tarikh Negeri Kelantan* (Kota Bharu, 1926).

²¹ For a list of his *syair* and his books on Islam, see M.A. Fawzi Basri, p. 45.

²² For an account of *Pengasuh*, a periodical published by the Majlis Ugama Islam Kelantan, see Abdul Rahman Al-Ahmadi, 'Notes Towards a History of Malay Periodicals in Kelantan' in Roff (ed.), *Kelantan*, pp. 171-4.

²³ See Ramli Haji Ahmad, 'Pengasuh sebagai Sumber Sejarah' (Research paper, Dept of History, University of Malaya, 1975) pp. 18-19.

Various other Malay papers and periodicals also allotted some space to history from time to time. The *Lembaga Melayu*,²⁴ for example, contained a number of historical tit-bits;²⁵ Malaysia's most revered Malay language scholar, Haji Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad (better known as Za'ba), made his contribution to historiography by translating Winstedt's book, *Malaya*,²⁶ for publication in serial form in the *Majallah Guru*.²⁷ In Kelantan a young scholar, Asaad Shukri,²⁸ wrote the history of Kelantan (*Riwayat Kelantan*) in fifteen episodes of the periodical *Kenchana*.²⁹ A few years later the *Warta Ahad*³⁰ carried a series on the history of Kuala Lumpur (*Riwayat Kuala Lumpur 50 Tahun Dahulu*) written by Abdullah Hukom.³¹

The majority of these works in this period continued to reveal marked evidence of parochialism, an indication that allegiance to the state ruler was by no means a thing of the past. Major Haji Muhammad Said, despite his strong attachment to the Johor royal family, alone displayed an international outlook. He wrote his first work on Malaya, however, only sometime in the 1930s.³² The honour of producing the first 'national' history belongs to Abdul Hadi bin Haji

²⁴ A Singapore daily published between 1914-1931; its editor was Mohd. Eunus bin Abdullah, a leader of Singapore Malay society. He was, in the 1920s, made a member of the Straits Legislative Council. The *Lembaga Melayu* is said to be a Malay edition of the English-language *Malaya Tribune*; see W.R. Roff, *Bibliography of Malay and Arabic Periodicals published in the Straits Settlements and Peninsular Malay States 1876-1941* (London, O.U.P., 1972) pp. 33-4.

²⁵ From several of these historical notes, Ahmad Kutu bin Abdul Rahman Sulong of Pahang compiled the *Sejarah Tanjong Besar atau Keturunan Pembesar-Pembesar Pahang* (Seremban, [1932]).

²⁶ R.O. Winstedt (ed.), *Malaya: The Straits Settlements and the Federated and Unfederated Malay States* (London, Constable, 1923).

²⁷ A teachers' journal, first published in Seremban in 1924, this journal owed its existence to three Malay Teachers' Associations – those of Selangor, Negeri Sembilan, and Melaka. From 1924-1932, its editor was Muhammad bin Dato' Muda Linggi. See Mohd. Janan bin Ahmad, 'Karya Sastra dan Esei dalam Majallah Guru (1924-1937)' *Dewan Bahasa*, II, i (1967). Za'ba later re-printed his articles as *Sejarah Ringkas Tanah Melayu* (Singapore, 1961).

²⁸ He was the brother of Datuk Mohd. Asri, the present leader of Parti Islam in Malaysia. For a brief note on Asaad Shukri, see Khoo Kay Kim, 'Malay Society, 1874-1920s', *JSEAS*, 5, ii (1974) pp. 192-4.

²⁹ First published in Kota Bharu in 1930, *Kenchana* was produced by Siti Mariam Saidi, assisted by Asaad Shukri. It focused on Kelantan history, but later published articles of general interest. Owing to pressure from the state government it ceased publication in mid-1931. See Abdul Hamid bin Othman, 'Intelijensia Melayu di dalam Beberapa Kegiatan Sosial di Kota Bharu di antara tahun 1900an hingga 1945' (unpublished B.A. academic exercise, University of Malaya, 1972) pp. 41-2.

³⁰ A Singapore weekly published between 1935-1941. Its first editor was Syed Hussein bin Ali Alsagoff. In 1941 Ibrahim Yaakob, a leading Malay radical, took over the paper.

³¹ Abdullah Hukom founded a Malay kampung. Still called Kampung Abdullah Hukom, it is situated in the Bangsar area about a mile from the University of Malaya.

³² This was published as part of the *Peredar* series. *Peredar* nos. VI to VIII were on 'Negeri-Negeri Dalam Tanah Melayu'. Muhammad Said travelled widely and wrote about his experiences mainly in *Peredar* (see Fawzi Basri, pp. 43-4).

Hasan, a graduate of the Malay College, Melaka. His *Sejarah Alam Melayu*, in three volumes, was published in the 1920s.³³ This was Malay history which tended to cut across state boundaries because the author focused on the existence of a Malay world and its glorious past.

Despite the growing popularity of history during this period, literature continued to hold greater attention among the Malay literati. The twenties and thirties saw the emergence of numerous Malay writers some of whom are still revered today, but they contributed negligibly towards the development of Malaysian historiography. Among the most active writers of that generation were Syed Sheikh Al-Hadi, Major Haji Muhammad Said bin Haji Sulaiman, Mohamad Datuk Muda Linggi, Haji Mohd. Sidin bin Haji Rashad, Haji Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad (Za'ba), Ahmad bin Abdullah (Ahmad Bakhtiar), Abdul Samad bin Ahmad, Ishak Haji Muhammad (Pak Sako), Abdul Rahim Kajai, Shamsuddin Saleh, Abdul Kadir Adabi, Haji Ahmad bin Haji Ismail, Asaad Shukri bin Haji Muda and Mohd. Salleh bin Haji Awang (Misbaha). Few of them showed sustained interest in history, if any interest at all. Haji Ahmad bin Haji Ismail did publish a history book in 1931, but it was on the travels of Mustafa Kemal (*Tarikh Perjalanan Mustapha Kemal Pasha*).³⁴ Haji Mohd. Sidin bin Haji Rashad and Mohd. Salleh bin Haji Awang, particularly the latter, took a deeper interest in history only after World War II. The former wrote three books;³⁵ the latter wrote two but is in the process of completing a third.³⁶

But, if some of these authors did not write history, they did exploit historical themes in their novels or short stories. The most prominent such writer was undoubtedly Ahmad bin Abdullah (Ahmad Bakhtiar). He was one of those persons with the rare gift of being able to master many skills — he was writer, teacher, magician and *dukun* (a native medicine-man). A graduate of the Melaka Malay College, he wrote a number of historical novels with titles such as *Darah Melaka*, *Keris Melaka*, *Korban Keris Melaka*, *Falsafah Hang Tuah*,³⁷

³³ The book was subsequently extended to five volumes with Buyong Adil, a student of Abdul Hadi at the Sultan Idris Training College (1924-27), completing the series. The *Sejarah Alam Melayu* was used in Malay schools until the early 1950s. In the past few years, Buyong Adil emulated Winstedt by writing a number of books on state history. He died in 1977.

³⁴ See Abdul Hamid bin Otham, p. 31.

³⁵ *Buku Asal Usul Alam Melayu*, *Buku Sejarah Negeri-Negeri Melayu*, and *Buku Asal Usul Adat Resam Melayu* (see Ramlah Adam, pp. 50-51). I have had no access to these books.

³⁶ *Mengkaji Sejarah Trengganu* (Singapore, 1954) and *Sejarah Trengganu* (Kuala Trengganu, 1966). The third book is also on Trengganu but by far the most meticulous. It will have hitherto unpublished documents and many interesting photographs. The book will be published by Utusan Melayu Press.

³⁷ Hang Tuah, a *laksamana* of the Melaka Sultanate, has become a legendary warrior. Part of the legend is that he never died but merely retreated to Gunung Ledang (Mount Ophir), behind Melaka.

Melayu Tak'kan Hilang,³⁸ *Hujan Darah di Selat Melaka* and *Puteri Gunung Ledang*. Some of these works were written after World War II.³⁹ One writer who combined a love for history and for literature was Abdul Samad bin Ahmad. He was educated in both Malay and English. He translated an English book entitled *Abraham Lincoln* in 1936 and followed this up by editing, in 1937, a work called *Kenang-Kenangan Selangor*.⁴⁰ It was an account of Selangor's history as related to Abdul Samad by the Datuk Amar Diraja, an officer in charge of court ceremonies there. After the war, Abdul Samad emulated Ahmad Bakhtiar by writing two historical novels called *Dosaku* and *Tak Melayu Hilang Di Dunia*, both of which had the Melaka Sultanate as their setting. He subsequently wrote a history of Malay literature.⁴¹

One of the noticeable features of intellectual development among the Malays in the twentieth century is that the Malay-educated showed far greater interest in cultural and literary activities than the English-educated. There were those, of course, who were educated in both languages, but their Malay education appears to have been the dominating influence for they wrote in Malay, not in English. The English-educated and the Malay-educated were not necessarily antagonistic groups, nor was there a total communication gap. The English-educated, many of whom enjoyed a more privileged position under British rule, were not unmindful of the welfare of the Malay-educated. Malay representatives in the Federal Council, for example, continually spoke on behalf of Malays who were in need.⁴² Nonetheless, greater exposure to English education tended to produce a more Westernized outlook. The English-educated were more familiar with and showed greater appreciation of English literature, and the history that they were imbued with was the history of the British Empire. A handful of them did write on Malay culture and traditions, but largely as a result of their association with Westerners; and their writings were published in the exclusive pages of the *Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society*.⁴³ Their contributions to Malaysian historiography, however, were practically non-existent. There is, of course, the work of Abdul Majid bin

³⁸ I prefer the translation 'The Malays Will Not Vanish from the World' to the literal 'Malays Will Not Vanish'.

³⁹ See Ramlah Adam, pp. 67-75.

⁴⁰ See n. 18.

⁴¹ Khalid Hussain, 'Abdul Samad Ahmad', *Dewan Sastra* (Oct. 1972). See also n. 53.

⁴² In particular the Dato' Undang Rembau (Abdullah bin Dahan), a graduate of the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar. For a brief account of Abdullah Dahan's speeches in the Federal Council, see W.R. Roff, *The Origins of Malay Nationalism* (Yale Southeast Asia Studies, no. 2) (New Haven, Yale U.P., 1967) pp. 202-3.

⁴³ See for example, Abdul Aziz bin Khamis (jointly with J.J. Sheehan), 'Adat Kuala Pilah', *JMBRAS*, 14, iii (1936); Majid Zainuddin, 'Some Malay Superstitions', *JMBRAS*, 6, iv (1928); Dato' Sedia Raja Abdullah Dahan, 'The Origin of the Pawang and the Berpuar Ceremony', *JMBRAS*, 5, ii (1927).

Zainuddin – *The Malays of Malaya, By One of Them* (Singapore, 1928). But, this is rather a discourse on Malay character and behaviour than a work of history.

Although it has been said that the first forty years of the twentieth century revealed no major departure from the established traditions of Malay historiography, it was nonetheless very much a period of transition. As has been noted, history (*tawarikh*) was now fully understood to mean a record of true happenings. It was no longer the preserve of court literati and members of the ruling elite; it had been popularized. But the content of history had not changed; it was still fixed on the *kerajaan* (government). It is within this context that special regard must be given to two works produced on the eve of World War II: Muhammad bin Dato' Muda Linggi, *Tarikh Surat Khabar* and Ibrahim bin Haji Yaakob, *Melihat Tanah Air*.⁴⁴ Though these are by no means outstanding historical works, they are novel in one respect – in content they represent an observable break in tradition. The first, a history of Malay newspapers, is a pioneering work. Even a half century earlier it would have been almost inconceivable that a historian should choose newspapers as his subject. The second work, given the title 'Seeing the Native Land', may at first not appear to be a work of history at all, as it is a record of the writer's travels in the Peninsula. But in fact the author, already deeply involved in politics, discusses constitutional-administrative developments in the Malay states to supplement the account of his travels. He is indeed the first Malay to use history to advance his political cause, and therefore his work has a very distinct political undertone. No Malay work hitherto had provided such an elaborate explanation of the colonial system of government in the Malay Peninsula. Historical writing had already been brought to the level of the populace; now its subject matter was to be transformed. But this in no way implies that historiography of the traditional mould was becoming an anachronism. The post-World War II years indeed reveal otherwise.

The immediate post-war years witnessed, in many ways, an extension of the Malay struggle for political domination which had surfaced by the late 1930s but had been submerged again by the Japanese invasion. The Japanese, between 1942-1945, contributed to the psychological basis of this movement, even though not fully encouraging its development. Those political organizations which were allowed to operate had overtly to demonstrate allegiance to the Japanese regime and could work towards national liberation only clandestinely. The first few years after the return of the British administration led to intense political activity among the Malays, beginning with the Malayan Union Proposal.

⁴⁴ Muhammad bin Dato' Muda Linggi was the editor of *Majallah Guru* (See n. 27). Ibrahim bin Haji Yaakob was one of the founder members in 1938 of the Kesatuan Melayu Muda (Young Malays Association), a radical party devoted to uplifting Malay society and ending colonial rule. On the eve of World War II he toured the Peninsula to further his cause.

Even the more radical Malay activists, however, with the exception of Ibrahim Yaakob, seldom relied on history to propagate their cause.⁴⁵ One of the more extreme Malays, Ahmad Boestamam, a journalist by profession, wrote a political pamphlet in 1946 called *Testament Politic A.P.I.*⁴⁶ One year later, Dr Burhanuddin Al-Helmi, later to lead the Pan-Malayan Islamic Party, wrote on the struggle of the Malays — *Sejarah Perjuangan Kita*. In 1950 he produced another book, *Asas Falsafah Kebangsaan Melayu*, in which he explained the historical basis of his political philosophy.⁴⁷

Only one serious history work appeared in the second half of the 1940s and this was about Tanjong Malim.⁴⁸ The writer, Zainal Abidin bin Daud, who had studied in the Sultan Idris Training College in 1929-30, had nostalgic memories of his stay in Tanjong Malim and therefore proceeded to record its history as he had gathered it from oral sources. Although seemingly a negligible piece of work, it is in fact rather significant because it was one of the still very rare occasions that a local historian had chosen a relatively mundane subject for his writing. But in terms of presentation and content it is reminiscent of the traditional works, for the author dwelt on the antecedents of the local headmen in much the same way as Ahmad Kutut had done in his *Sejarah Tanjong Besar*.

The subsequent approach of independence and its actual achievement inspired the writing of numerous historical works. Between 1954 and the mid-sixties no less than twenty-six works were completed dealing with various aspects of Malay history. There were the usual contributions to the study of state histories.⁴⁹ Others dealt with Malay heroes, particularly those who had resisted British hegemony.⁵⁰ There were also studies of local history, as well as of

⁴⁵ At the end of the War, Ibrahim Yaakob migrated to Indonesia. There he wrote *Sedjarah dan Perjuangan di Malaya* (Jogjakarta, 1948) using the name I.K. Agastja. In Indonesia Ibrahim is better known as Iskandar Kamel. He also wrote *Nusa dan Bangsa Melayu* (Jakarta, 1951).

⁴⁶ API is the abbreviation for Angkatan Pemuda Insaf (Organization of Awakened Youths), a party founded in Ipoh in February 1946.

⁴⁷ At that time Dr Burhanuddin was the leader of the Partai Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya (Malayan Malays Nationalist Party), founded in 1945.

⁴⁸ *Riwayat Tanjong Malim* (Kuala Pilah, after 1947).

⁴⁹ Among these were Abdullah Haji Musa, *Sejarah Perak Dahulu dan Sekarang* (Singapore, [1957]); Asaad Shukri, *Sejarah Kelantan* (Kota Bharu, 1962); Arifin bin Abdul Rashid, *Ringkasan Sejarah Kelantan* (Kota Bharu, 1962); Mustafa Tam, *Tawarikh Salasilah Kedah* (Alor Star, 1962); Abdul Samad bin Idris (ed.), *Negeri Sembilan dan Sejarahnya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1968). See also Shahrom Hussein, *Tawarikh Johor* (Singapore, 1950).

⁵⁰ Yahya Abdullah, *Peperangan Tok Janggut atau Balasan Derhaka* (Kota Bharu, 1955); Abdul Talib bin Haji Ahmad, *Sejarah Dato' Bahaman Orang Kaya Semantan* (Kuala Lumpur, 1961); *idem*, *Darah Mengalir di-Pasir Salak* (Kuala Lumpur, 1961); Haji Abdullah bin Amirah, *Riwayat Hidup Tok Janggut dan Peperangan di Kelantan* (Penang, 1963); Abdul Jalil Haji Noor, *Tok Janggut Pahlawan Kelantan* (Kota Bharu, 1965). There was also another work on a Malay hero, written earlier — Syahba (a pen-name), *Pesaka Naning* (Kuala Pilah, 1951). For further information see bibliographical appendix.

the history of Malay education and literature.⁵¹ An interesting autobiography by Abdul Aziz bin Ishak,⁵² which provides some useful insights into several aspects of Malaysian history, completes the list.

It is perhaps symptomatic of the time that when what would normally have been a well-received book on the history of one of the states, Trengganu, was published in 1954, an attack on it appeared in the Malay paper, *Utusan Zaman* (12 Dec. 1954). The writer, calling himself 'Sahabat' (Friend), made the following observation:

When it was published it was received with hope that its contents would be more positive than that of the existing books written by foreigners but this expectation has not been met by the book *Mengkaji Sejarah Trengganu*.

Almost the entire contents of the book merely describe the magnificence of the Sultan of Trengganu together with all the resplendant paraphernalia of the palace, whereas the existence of the common people under the rule of the sultan receives no elucidation and therefore one feels that the book is no different from those prescribed for reading in Malay schools today. What is claimed to be new material is the account given of the eight sons of the Sultan of Trengganu, which subject was previously little known.

As such, although the efforts of the author in writing the history book must be commended, it is only too clear that the writer of 'Mengkaji Sejarah Trengganu' has revealed to us that even as an independent historian he found it extremely difficult to surmount certain major problems.

What I mean is that in writing history one ought not to be influenced by particular circumstances because history, which deals with the past, is concerned with undeniable facts; all that happened in bygone days, whether it be about kings who were just or cruel or about subjects who were oppressed, represents a chain of historical events that are real for our understanding of our own race.

⁵¹ See Daud bin Sulaiman, *Ringkasan Tawarikh Orang Kaya-Kaya dan Penghulu-Penghulu Batu Pahat* (Muar, 1955); Abdul Talib bin Haji Ahmad, *Riwayat Kinta* (Kuala Lumpur, 1959); Raja Razman bin Raja Abdul Hamid (ed.), *Hulu Perak dalam Sejarah* (Ipoh, 1963); Mohammad Daud Jamil, *Tawarikh Gunong Reng* (Kota Bharu, 1959). On education, see Mansur Sanusi, *Sejarah Perkembangan Pelajaran Melayu* (Penang, 1955). On literature, see Abdul Samad bin Ahmad, *Sejarah Kesusasteraan Melayu* (Kuala Lumpur, 1957); Shahrom Hussein, *Antara Penarang2 Novel Melayu dan Karya-nya* (Singapore, 1963).

⁵² *Katak keluar di bawah Tempurung* [The Frog comes out from under the Coconut Shell] (Singapore, n.p., 1959). Aziz Ishak was once the Minister of Agriculture, Fishery and Forestry.

To conceal any part of that merely to give pride of place to the splendour of palace and king is, in my opinion, to do poor justice to the writing of history consistent with the needs of our society in the present age.⁵³

The critic's views were clearly in advance of his time. Even among professional historians of that period,⁵⁴ there had been no consciousness that the approach to Malaysian history had been too elitist. Among the local historians too there was no realization of the need to provide a broader perspective on Malay history. Many continued to write parochial state history with the conventional emphasis on rulers and great men (*orang besar-besar*)⁵⁵ but the newer generation of historians tended to be inflamed by the spirit of *merdeka* (independence) and wrote mainly to preserve memories of the Malay past.⁵⁶ Two books in particular, written at the time Malaya achieved independence, reflected the spirit of the age – Ibrahim Yaakob called his book *Sekitar Malaya Merdeka* (About Independent Malaya), and Zainal Abidin Daud called his *Sejarah Malaya Merdeka* (The History of Independent Malaya).⁵⁷ This was followed in the late sixties and early seventies by more direct political history and political biographies.⁵⁸

Beginning from the 1940s, therefore, it is possible to discern two general categories of local historians. There were those who continued to uphold the age-old practice of writing dynastic history, perceiving the past in relation to kings and kingdoms, or as a modification, in relation to *datuk* (men of titles), *penghulu* (headmen) and *pahlawan* (warriors). They also did not neglect their cultural heritage, though it was seen in terms of the pomp and pageant of court

⁵³ See Kadir bin Che Mat, 'Peranan Misbaha (Haji Mohd. Salleh bin Haji Awang) dalam Kontek Persejaraan Trengganu' (Academic exercise, Dept of History, University of Malaya, 1975) App. 37.

⁵⁴ In the University of Malaya, Singapore, there was considerable discussion in the second half of the 1950s on the problem of Euro-centricism and Asian-centricism. Very little else was emphasized.

⁵⁵ In addition to the works mentioned in n. 51, see also Haji Mohd. Mokhtar bin Haji Mohd. Daud, *Singgahsana Negeri Pahang* (Pekan, 1957); Raja Razman bin Raja Abdul Hamid (ed.), *Hulu Perak dalam Sejarah* (Ipoh, 1963); Mohd. Hussin Khali'i bin Haji Awang, *Kelantan dari Zaman ke Zaman* (Kota Bharu, 1970); and Asa'ad Shukri bin Haji Muda, *Detik-detik Sejarah Kelantan* (Kota Bharu, 1971).

⁵⁶ Apart from the works mentioned above, see also Darus Ahmad, *Pancharan Melayu* (Penang, 1957); *idem*, *Orang Besar Tanah Air* (Penang, 1958).

⁵⁷ See bibliographical appendix.

⁵⁸ See Mohd. Yunus Hamidi, *Sejarah Pergerakan Politik Melayu Semenanjung* (Kuala Lumpur, 1966); Anwar Abdullah, *Dato' Onn* (Petaling Jaya, 1971); Ahmad Boestamam, *Merintas Jalan Ke Puncak* (Kuala Lumpur, 1972); *idem*, *Dr Burhanuddin Putera Setia Melayu Raya* (Kuala Lumpur, 1972); *idem*, *Tujuh Tahun Memanjang* (Kuala Lumpur, 1976). See also Syed Abdullah bin Hamid Al-Idrus, *Peristiwa-Peristiwa Siasah di-Tanah Melayu* (Singapore, 1962).

ceremonies and protocol. The other group tended to depart from traditional themes; they were greatly influenced by the new political climate and therefore saw history more in terms of the recent rather than the distant past. For them the world of courts and kings held little reality, mainly because they were not part of that environment. Indeed some of them were political activists involved in a struggle to bring about a more egalitarian and democratic society. They perceived history purely in political terms — the struggle against the shackles of colonialism, the achievement of independence and the fight for social justice. If they referred at all to the distant past, it was to seek a foundation for a more vehement expression of Malay nationalism. Hence for both groups the past was perceived in simplistic terms; it was closely identified with their own social milieu. Detachment in the interpretation of history was not conceived of as a virtue. But precisely because of this the writings of the local historians do not merely enrich Malaysian historiography, they are invaluable historical sources for the academic historian, since they manifestly reflect the thinking and values of distinct segments of the society.

HISTORY AND IDEOLOGY

As has been noted repeatedly in this volume, the relationship between historical perceptions and political action is much closer in twentieth century Southeast Asia than in the contemporary West. As both perception and action have been changing with extraordinary rapidity, the few intellectuals in a position to mediate new discoveries and perceptions to their people have wielded great influence. Those among them who attempted to take an academic stance detached from the practical consequences of their writing have understandably been regarded as irresponsible.

Even more than historians, ideologists have the obligation to relate idea to action. They risk disaster in the real world if they do not correctly analyse the historical forces both within their country and beyond it. They must provide historical reasons both for present sacrifices and for future triumphs, and yet strive to avoid the constant danger of falling prisoner to their own form of historical determinism.

The following papers consider the interaction of ideology and history in colonial Vietnam and independent Indonesia. In both cases revolutionaries were able to portray the dynamic of their country's history leading upwards towards anti-colonial revolution and complete liberation. The first paper describes the historical soul-searching that preceded the August 1945 Revolution and helped to synthesize a new consciousness, both patriotic and Marxist in orientation. In the influential PKI history of 1957, analysed in the second paper, it was the 1945-49 revolution, the founding of the nation-state, which became the central fact of Indonesian history.

VIETNAMESE HISTORICAL REASSESSMENT, 1900-1944

David Marr

Vietnamese take history very seriously, possibly more so than anyone else in Southeast Asia. This is not a new characteristic, nor is it limited to the educated elite. Prior to the twentieth century, while the king and his high mandarins were determining ancient policy guidelines and maintaining detailed records, local scholars were writing poetry suffused with historical nuance, preparing glosses and interpretations of the Chinese classics for students, and collecting data on everything from old tropical medical remedies to popular folksongs and ghost stories. Many local families and clans kept careful genealogical and biographical records (*gia phả*). And even the poorest, uneducated farmer was probably able to recount his lineage to the third or fourth generation, knew the basic ritual history of his village back to the tutelary deity, and could identify several Vietnamese culture heroes who had fought the Chinese, Cham or Khmer.

Naturally many Vietnamese are proud of this attention to the past, and naturally we academics warm to the thought of working through such an abundance of historical traces. However, when one is trying to transform society, such a reservoir of written and oral tradition can be a potential burden. Indeed, a few Westernizing intellectuals of the 1920s and 1930s argued that the slate should be wiped clean, the past forgotten. Vietnam henceforth could draw its strength from the future, and 'let the dead bury their dead' as Karl Marx once phrased it.¹ That idea foundered because no one has ever succeeded in manufacturing firm new mass identities out of whole cloth, and because these seeming radicals, by choosing to ignore the Vietnamese past, had no way of measuring just how much they themselves might remain prisoners of tradition.²

The preferred approach until the 1940s was to treat the past as being very much alive, formidable in ways not always comprehended. If you were a Vietnamese determined to alter temporal realities then it was necessary to delineate, analyse and argue acceptance or rejection of particular historical legacies. The comparative foil was Western history, with residual knowledge of Chinese history and some attention to modern Japan. If you were a Vietnamese trying to defend the status quo you probably first attacked such crass utilitarianism, sensing that it undermined faith in allegedly timeless values and institutions. When that failed, as it certainly did by 1920, you found yourself casting about like your opponents for contemporary foreign ammunition, this time to support the idea that 'outer' cultural elements might be cast aside but an 'inner', perpetual Vietnamese spirit retained.

¹ Karl Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (Moscow, Foreign Language Publishing House, 1948) p. 19.

² One of the best examples of the pitfalls contained in this posture is Hoang Dao, *Muoi Dieu Tam Niem* (Saigon, n.d.), originally written about 1938.

In the 1920s, as it turned out, conservatives saw their worst fears justified. Nothing was sacred. No old idea could be sustained without running the gauntlet of 'civilization' (*van minh*), which, while meaning different things to different people, still definitely ruled out unquestioning acceptance of conventional wisdom. On the other hand, no new idea survived very long simply because it was intellectually enticing, a fascinating exotic from overseas. It had to begin to explain Vietnamese conditions and assist in charting a future course, or it too would be thrown out along with the offerings to Confucius, the Taoist amulets and the expensive Buddhist funerals.

If nineteenth century Vietnamese historiography was a function of the central Confucian linkage between ethics and politics, early twentieth century writings shifted the emphasis to a raw, essentially amoral struggle for survival – particularly of one ethnic group or nation against another. Often this was phrased in psychological terms, the delineation of character traits that were said to assist or hinder individuals and groups in gaining mastery over other human beings and the elements. As we shall see, the largest single group of historically-related publications dealt with heroes, not just any heroes, but ones that exuded energy, determination and resourcefulness. All of this was part of a broader preoccupation with colonial subjugation and the future of the Vietnamese people, either within or outside the French 'protectorate'.

By the late 1920s, however, some writers were moving away from both ethical and psychological paradigms to the study of history as process. These periodic and topical investigations challenged the earlier assumptions of conservatives and radicals alike that there was some special formula, either old or new, 'Eastern' or 'Western', that could bring Vietnam the eventual independence and freedom that even conservatives professed to be striving for. History could suggest roads to travel, but only experience could decide what was right for Vietnam at a given point in time. Nor did personal regeneration always precede social and political change, the ancient *Ta hsueh* sequence that, again, both ethical and psychological proponents had accepted. During the 1930s Hegelian dialectics and Marxist historical materialism were discussed intently and a beginning was made in testing these theories against Vietnamese history and society.

The urge to action ruled out any triumph of nineteenth century European determinism in Vietnam, however. While the intelligentsia had eagerly assimilated the idea of linear progress, it had to be progress in a Vietnamese direction. Many a Vietnamese revolutionary went to the guillotine, or undertook a suicide mission, absolutely convinced that he was giving the wheel of history a nudge upwards towards the millennium. As the anti-colonial struggle shifted decisively to the mountains and countryside in the early 1940s, history as essence and history as process were thrown together in unsteady alliance, with little thought to analytical niceties. Whatever served the purpose of mobilizing thousands, tens of thousands, eventually millions of Vietnamese peasants in an epic struggle of national liberation was correct.

To say that this was a recalling, reorganizing or rejuvenation of premodern Vietnamese ideology is to miss the point. Conditions were so different, attitudes towards life so changed, that no matter how much Vietnamese of the 1940s (or later) may have thought they were establishing direct links with primordial reality, this was not possible. While history could be made significant for the present, it could not be re-enacted in the present.

The Nineteenth Century Legacy

Nineteenth century concern for the past may have been widespread, but the potential range of historical interpretation was narrow. Sung Neo-Confucianism dominated the thinking of monarchs, mandarins and local scholars alike. More precisely, it was normally via the writings of Chu Hsi (1130-1200) that Vietnamese approached the Confucian Four Books and Five Classics. Hoping to extend the tenure of their specifically Vietnamese dynasty beyond what might be expected otherwise, Nguyen rulers sifted the historical chronicles of Ssu-ma Kuang (1019-1086) for choice precedents. Ironically, just at the time when Vietnam was facing its most grave and unprecedented challenge, Vietnamese scholars sneered at alternative explanations, remaining profoundly confident that they possessed the only true and legitimate doctrine.

The heart of this doctrine lay in the cultivation of virtuous conduct. Socially this was expressed in the five relationships (*ngu huan*): ruler-subject, father-son, husband-wife, elder brother-younger brother, and friend-friend. Only the last held any egalitarian possibilities, the others being inherently vertical and unequal. By far the most important were the ruler-subject and father-son relationships, each patterned to some degree on the other. Personal loyalty (*trung*) of subject to ruler was the essence of one, filial piety (*hieu*) the essence of the other. Each concept was surrounded by an elaborate exegesis and historical case law.

Ethical cement for this structure was supplied by a set of cardinal virtues, the number eventually stabilizing at five: benevolence (*nhân*), righteousness (*ngĩa*), ritual (*lễ*), knowledge (*trí*), and sincerity (*tín*).³ 'Benevolence' was clearly the most important, occasioning intricate debate and refinement among Chinese writers over two millennia. For Vietnamese of the nineteenth century, however, benevolence seems to have taken on qualities of abstract, even mystical goodness, often limited to the king alone.⁴ By contrast, 'righteousness'

³ The famous 19th century Vietnamese poet, Nguyen Dinh Chieu, styled these 'The five precious things in the forest of *Nho* that must be cared for'. *Thơ Văn Nguyễn Đình Chiểu* (Hanoi, 1971) pp. 234-5. For earlier meanings of *Nho*, see O. Wolters' essay in this volume.

⁴ On the other hand, it seems unlikely that a Vietnamese moralist would have gone as far as the Thai chronicler studied by C. Reynolds in this book, and argue that 'a people without a king is like a river without water'. The 15th century statesman Nguyen Trai, for example, had stated that 'The people carry the throne as the ocean carries a boat. And, like the ocean, they are able to capsize the throne'.

had much more concrete implications, which even the most lowly subject was expected to understand. Righteousness meant doing what was correct rather than what was of immediate personal gain, and accepting one's obligations within the system, in short, practising self-denial for the greater good. It was a concept that continued to be invoked beyond the collapse of royal resistance to the French, beyond destruction of the traditional social system, beyond even the final defeat of United States imperialism.

'Ritual' meant careful attention to social forms, to decorum, as well as intricate ceremonies directed towards Heaven, the ancestors, local deities and assorted wandering spirits. For several decades the Vietnamese court entertained the notion that the 'barbarian' French could be pacified if only they would accept the proper rituals. 'Knowledge' emphasized the judging of human character in order to maximize other good traits. It was never an end in itself, nor did it focus on nature. 'Sincerity' meant the cultivation of trust, the elimination of scheming and suspicion between ruler and subject, father and son, and so on. It seems to have been the least discussed of cardinal virtues.

Confucianism became a state religion because of historical additions to these social formulas and moral codes. Perhaps most interesting was the work of Tung Chung-shu (c. 179 to c. 104 B.C.), who among other things incorporated the cyclical *yin-yang* concept from the *Book of Changes* into the divination principles of the five elements (wood, fire, earth, metal and water). By means of this ingenious codification Heaven and humanity were linked together by an abundance of omens, often comprehensible only to those who had fully mastered the subject. Subsequent Confucian diviners put themselves at the service of rulers who insisted on maintaining a tight monopoly on actual communication with Heaven, and who presumed to influence heavenly phenomena by their moral (or immoral) conduct.

Nineteenth century Vietnamese rulers were deep believers in this system. Minh Mang (r. 1820-1841) was convinced, for example, that some personal lapse in morality had caused the drought and plague which greeted his accession to the throne. When a court mandarin tried to absolve him from blame by reference to reports of the plague having come from the West, Minh Mang rejected this notion with impeccable logic, saying that 'If I had not been lacking in virtue how could disaster have got in from overseas?'⁵ Tu Duc (r. 1847-1883), faced with more profound cataclysms, repeatedly punished himself by writing sharply self-critical poetry, reducing the number of dishes at the regal dinner table, or desisting from royal hunting expeditions for several weeks. In this way the undoubtedly sincere desire of the monarch to alleviate the growing dangers facing Vietnam were focused even more intensely on the

⁵ Quoted in Tran Van Giau, *Su Phat Trien Cua Tu Tuong o Viet-Nam* (Hanoi, 1973) Vol. I, p. 132. The apparent similarity of this Confucian position and the 'interdependent nexus linking royal virtue with agricultural and economic prosperity', discussed by C. Reynolds in this volume is remarkable.

search for omens and the subsequent personal rituals of blame or rejoicing, rather than on serious, sustained investigation of military, economic and political causes. As for the Western enemy, because their thinking ignored *yin-yang* and the five elements, Tu Duc declared them completely out of tune with nature's unifying principle (*ly*), and thus undeserving of any respect.⁶

The primary purpose of studying and writing history in nineteenth century Vietnam was to reinforce the allegedly timeless Sino-Vietnamese ethical and religious principles summarized above. History had no existence independent of morality. True, historians often served the monarch by searching texts and records for precedents on problems of political, economic or military policy. However, a precedent lacking the proper moral pedigree was unlikely to be suggested, or even be readily available if it was outside the authorized canon. Having the best pedigrees, Chinese precedents monopolized the attention of most advisors, although Vietnamese experience did manage to intrude occasionally. Buddhist and Taoist precedents were suspect, despite the strong impact of these religions in Vietnam in earlier centuries and despite their continuing relevance to the people at large. Examples from 'barbarian' countries were rigorously excluded until the policy situation had become practically hopeless, even though for centuries Vietnam had maintained a degree of contact with Southeast Asia and the West.

Approaching history as a subcategory of particular ethico-religious doctrines also influenced Vietnamese judgements on their ability to alter events, in short their degree of free will. Nineteenth century palace historians were so conditioned to thinking of the Chinese as superior that it was necessary to explain past Vietnamese victories over Chinese forces in terms of the latter's temporary weaknesses rather than the former's strength. They were also familiar with the grand mathematical designs of Shao Yung, wherein time was divided into 30, 360, 10,800 and 129,000 year cycles linked to the *Book of Changes*. Vietnamese events would occasionally be interpreted on that basis; King Tu Duc found this formula helpful in explaining the fall of the Le dynasty (1428-1788), since it eliminated the need to grant the detested peasant-oriented Tay Son movement any accomplishments.⁷

Nevertheless, it was not in the interests of the monarch to allow mindless determinism to usurp his own role of influencing Heaven's actions through royal sanctity. As Tu Duc said, relying on such formulas would be like 'putting on a blindfold and arguing about which items were white and which were black. Even if correct it would be pure luck!'⁸ In fact, to the degree that highly literate kings like Minh Mang, Thieu Tri (r. 1841-1847) and Tu Duc took a direct supervisory and editorial role in the writing of palace history they were able to

⁶ Tran Van Giau, pp. 134-44, 150-3.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 178-80, 191, 211-12.

⁸ From the *Kham Dinh Viet Su Thong Giam Cuong Muc*, cited in *ibid.*, pp. 180-1.

select their own precedents from a large, albeit antiquated, idealized and mostly Chinese literary treasure house, both to judge the past and to justify their personal decisions. Not surprisingly they also made sure that the histories emphasized the legitimate accession of their own dynasty, the total illegitimacy of any competitors or popular uprisings, and the need for unity and stability in facing foreign dangers.

Local Vietnamese literati were capable of picking their own precedents and of making their own judgements, although they had to be careful. As the court lost round after round to the encroaching French, debate became intense and eventually went beyond boundaries acceptable to any monarch. Using classical materials, of course, popular scholar-poets like Nguyen Dinh Chieu (1822-1888) and Phan Van Tri (1830-1910) expounded the idea that men, all men, have the potentiality of changing first themselves and then external reality.⁹ The French nonetheless moved onward to physically occupy and then 'pacify' Vietnam. As the new century dawned, younger scholars finally went outside the previous Neo-Confucian canon, avidly taking up the syncretic, utopian writings of K'ang Yu-wei (1858-1927) and the hard-hitting iconoclasm of Liang Ch'i-ch'ao (1873-1929).¹⁰

First Contact With Western Historiography, 1900-1925

Deeply shaken by defeat, yet still steeped in the five relationships, five virtues and five elements, some of the Vietnamese scholar-gentry sought alternative frameworks for human existence and action. Agonizing self-doubt became the impetus to critical inquiry and, eventually, new hopefulness. Attacks on classical studies, the traditional political system, alleged psychological weaknesses, were all first mounted effectively in the brief period 1905-1908, then forced by the reaction of the French and puppet royal court to assume more diffuse, less challenging postures. In the 1920s critics again gained the initiative, in far more favourable social and political circumstances, and the old way of thinking was never able to recover.

Among his many credits, Phan Boi Chau (1867-1940) may be considered Vietnam's first modern historian. First and foremost an anti-colonial proselytizer and organizer, almost all of Phan's writings were designed to rouse patriotic sentiment, to denounce French exploitation, and to propose solutions to Vietnam's contemporary quandary. Within that overall framework he attempted at various points to explore Vietnamese history, not simply as a rhetorical device, but in order to test new hypotheses, to clarify ideas in his own mind,

⁹ Interestingly enough, Nguyen Dinh Chieu used Catholicism as his antagonistic foil, arguing that Confucianism was the close, comprehensible, patriotic 'Way of Man' (*Dao Nguoi*), versus the other-worldly, determinist and traitorous 'Way of Heaven/God' (*Dao Troi*). Later in life, when nothing seemed to work against the French, he became a disillusioned determinist.

¹⁰ D.G. Marr, *Vietnamese Anticolonialism, 1885-1925* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1971) pp. 98-100.

and to urge readers to go further on their own.¹¹ He abandoned the old historiographical approach according to dynasties, individual rulers and good or evil advisors. One alternative was topical, using such categories as: establishment/re-establishment of the fatherland; ethnic and population information; geography and natural resources; 'times of great change'; prominent military and literary personalities; physical expansion and frontier maintenance; tributary relations; and contacts with the West. Another of Phan's alternatives had even more radical implications since it incorporated concepts of history based on linear progress and the Darwinian theory of struggle for existence. Vietnam's time line was divided into six periods: animal; animal-primitive; primitive; primitive-developing; developing; and civilized. In the first decade of the twentieth century Vietnam was said to be in the 'developing' period, with 'civilization' possibly only after sovereignty had been regained.

The contrast with previous cyclical or golden age conceptions of history was dramatic. Along with many others of his generation, Phan Boi Chau was deeply impressed by recent Chinese and Japanese interpretations of the works of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer. Indeed, as it turned out, Social Darwinism continued to filter to other Vietnamese groups as well, becoming the most disruptive counter-perception of history and society until the late 1920s. At first 'survival of the fittest' assumed the shape of the grim reaper, the fear that Vietnamese had perhaps awakened too late and were threatened with extinction. Yet, to refuse to struggle was sure suicide and, besides, a denigration of one's heroic ancestors. Later the feeling grew that knowledge of how to struggle, how to progress in even the most difficult circumstances, was not a secret monopolized by any nation, people or ruling class, but an open book available to all who bothered to seek it out. Most importantly, progress was made by masses of people struggling to survive and flourish, not by a handful of rulers and sages seeking to bring heaven and earth into harmony by proper ethical conduct. Once this idea took root and began to be widely disseminated, the focus shifted to the question of which modern philosophy explained the most about the contemporary world and was most appropriate to Vietnamese needs.

Phan Boi Chau's generation made the study of Western history, philosophy and political theory emotionally acceptable, indeed a patriotic necessity. It had become possible to assimilate previously 'barbarian' ideas while continuing to remain Vietnamese and, in the case of many, continuing to hate specific Western practices in Indochina. For example, Phan Boi Chau drew the conclusion based on comparative historical analysis, as well as personal observation, that the previous Vietnamese concept of the state, emphasizing a

¹¹ Works by Phan Boi Chau most significant in a historiographical context are *Viet-Nam Vong Quoc Su* written in 1905, and *Viet-Nam Quoc Su Khao* written in 1909. Marr, pp. 114-19, 148-9 has a brief and inadequate discussion. Tran Van Giau, *Su Phat Trien cua Tu Tuong o Viet-Nam* (Hanoi, 1975) Vol. II, pp. 159-72, has the most detailed analysis I have yet seen.

particular relationship between ruler and subject, had to be discarded in favour of a state defined in terms of citizenry, territory and sovereignty. Of these three components citizenry was most important – people who were alert, increasingly well educated, and motivated by generalized patriotism rather than personal fidelity to a leader.

It would be a mistake however, to think of Phan Boi Chau and other writers of the scholar-gentry as having broken the Neo-Confucian connection between politics and morality. While Phan discarded dynastic history and downgraded Chinese precedents in favour of Vietnamese ones, many of his causal explanations were quite within tradition. While he was trying to define a national history of Vietnam, with special attention to mass unity (or lack of it) in times of foreign confrontation, his vision of what the masses might be thinking and wanting to do was very limited. Phan was particularly anxious to assert that 'man makes the times', but it was individual heroes who fascinated him and, as a result, there was almost no discussion of larger social and economic forces. Nor was success a condition for hero status. The two crucial elements were that a hero's motives should be pure (thus presumably excluding the Caesarian-Napoleonic thread in Western hero literature) and that he should be somehow linked to the masses by 'like-mindedness' (*dong tam*), an emotionally evocative but essentially idealistic concept. Only much later did Phan come to emphasize the possibilities inherent in the concerted actions of a large number of 'small' heroes. By that time a new generation of intelligentsia was pursuing that idea on their own, and from a potentially more radical perspective.

An Overview of Publications, 1912-1944

From 1908 to the early 1920s, Phan Boi Chau and various other scholar-gentry luminaries were either in jail or forced to remain overseas. Some *émigré* publications did manage to slip past colonial customs officials, but the growing dangers inherent in trying to circulate such subversive materials meant that they generally had to be committed to memory and disseminated orally. Meanwhile, the French mounted their own intellectual campaign with the help of some scholar-gentry collaborators and some bright young graduates of the colonial interpreter's school. By 1918, Confucian civil examinations were discontinued throughout the country, the Franco-Vietnamese school system was expanded, and there was much talk of combining modern science with traditional morality to produce a new, syncretic civilization; the best of both worlds, it was claimed. *Quoc-ngu* (romanized script) and French replaced Chinese and *nom* (demotic script) as the accepted modes of written communication. By 1925, when Phan Boi Chau was captured in Shanghai and brought back for trial, an exciting new atmosphere was evident in the cities and towns of Vietnam, partly as a result of the burgeoning number of newspapers, journals, pamphlets and books that the colonial authorities allowed to be printed during this period.

Books and pamphlets dealing primarily with history, biography or traditional Vietnamese literature were an important part of this publishing explosion. A cursory survey of more than 9,000 *quoc-ngu* publications surviving from the three decades prior to the August 1945 Revolution reveals at least 288 titles in these categories (see table on following page).¹² The total number of historically related books and pamphlets printed exceeded 530,000 copies.¹³ When one considers that in the mid-1920s probably no more than five per cent of the Vietnamese population, or 750,000 people, could be considered literate in any language, such attention to the past is even more striking and deserving of explanation.

The first interesting clue is that 140 titles, or almost half of those located, were published in the brief period 1925-1930. Forty-six (16%) were published in 1912-1924 and 102 (35%) in 1931-1944. The late 1920s were years of intense soul-searching and growing political consciousness among urban Vietnamese in general and members of the new intelligentsia and nascent working class in particular. For many this included rediscovery of the Vietnamese past, or at least certain parts of it, after having had to recite lessons in colonial primary schools about 'our ancestors the Gauls', and being instructed to refer to France as the 'mother country'. Equally important, however, was the effort to reach out to the histories and recent experiences of other countries, places as seemingly unrelated as Turkey and China, Poland and America.

The largest category of historical publication, and also a main cause of the 1925-1930 bulge, was that of biographies and biographical dramas or fiction – some 112 of them, or thirty-nine per cent of the total. Thirty-five were devoted to foreign individuals and seventy-seven to Vietnamese; the interest in foreign paragons became very strong in the late 1920s but practically disappeared after 1930.¹⁴ Among foreigners, Sun Yat-sen led the field with six biographies,

¹² In 1971-72, with the kind permission of Mme Christiane Rageau, curator of the Vietnamese collection in the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris), I went through this repository title by title, obtaining a valuable, if necessarily non-quantitative, impressionistic view. A complete analysis would probably double or triple the number of titles on historically related subjects. In particular, Mme Rageau has identified 271 *quoc-ngu* renditions of traditional Vietnamese literature, whereas I located only 60. I also glanced rather impatiently at the 1200 or so Buddhist, Taoist, Catholic and Cao Dai texts, subsequently coming to realize that some deserved more careful attention. Chinese traditional histories and literature were excluded as well. In retrospect, a count should at least have been kept of *quoc-ngu* translations of Chinese historical fiction, for example the *Tale of Three Kingdoms*, since various Vietnamese radicals indicated later how avidly they read such materials in preference to arid colonial school texts.

¹³ This figure is based on the handwritten notations on many of the titles in the Bibliothèque Nationale collection, the result of their having been submitted by publishers as part of the French government's *Depot légal* system. It is surely conservative. For example, an official 1931 French report lists 415,000 *quoc-ngu* elementary school textbooks on history and geography being printed in 1925-1930 alone. Most of that amount would not show up in my estimate.

¹⁴ By way of comparison, Dr A. Reid, in a personal correspondence, has indicated that for Malaya and Indonesia during the same general period there was probably a significantly lower proportion of publications on indigenous historical personalities.

Table 1
Partial Survey of Histories, Historical Dramatizations,
Biographies and Traditional Vietnamese Literature, 1912-1944*

A. Biographies			
Vietnamese personalities	77		
Modern Chinese personalities	16		
Western personalities	18		
Other (Gandhi)	<u>1</u>	112	(39%)
B. Vietnam Histories & Historical Dramatizations			
Translations of major traditional sources into <i>quoc-ngu</i>	6		
General textbooks and popularized summaries	11		
Specific historical period	10		
Specific subject concentration	11		
Provincial histories/geographies (northern provinces: 5; central: 20; southern: 4)	29		
Others (regional, district, village, family, etc)	<u>11</u>	78	(27%)
C. <i>Quoc Ngu</i> Renditions of Traditional Literary Works			
<i>Luc Van Tien</i>	13		
<i>Truyen Kieu</i>	7		
<i>Thach Sanh</i>	10		
<i>Pham Cong Cuc Hoa</i>	10		
<i>Quan Am Thi Kinh</i>	5		
<i>Cung Oan Ngam Khuc</i>	4		
<i>Hoa Tien</i>	4		
Others (<i>Phan Tran, Chinh Phu Ngam,</i> <i>Nhi Do Mai</i>)	<u>7</u>	60	(21%)
D. Traditional Literary Compilations, Textbooks, Reference Works			
		17	(6%)
E. Non-Vietnamese History (excluding biography)			
	<u>21</u>		(7%)
Total	<u>288</u>		(100%)

* Different editions of the same publication are counted separately.

a reflection of the intense interest of the Vietnamese intelligentsia in Chinese revolutionary precedents. Columbus and Washington enjoyed three biographies each; Nelson, Lincoln and Lenin followed with two. Others given full-length attention were J.J. Rousseau, Madame Roland, Li Yuan-hung, Huang Hsing, Ts'ai Ao (who had helped overthrow Yuan Shih-k'ai), Feng Yu-hsiang (the 'Christian Warlord'), Chiang Kai-shek, Louis Kossuth and Mahatma Gandhi. There were also four compilations of stories about individual modern Chinese and Korean women, one on individual Soviet women, one on Chinese youth heroes, one on European writer-activists and, lastly, a colonial textbook on such authorized French heroes as Joan of Arc, Richelieu and Napoleon.¹⁵

Twenty-eight different Vietnamese personalities were the objects of full-length publications. The focus was overwhelmingly on leaders of anti-foreign struggles, dynastic founders, and military figures. The Trung sisters, who had led a famous if unsuccessful revolt against Chinese colonialists of the first century A.D., were given pride of place with eleven publications, all admittedly more mythical than factual in content. Tran Hung Dao, thirteenth century leader of a protracted, victorious struggle against the Mongols and also someone whose personality and actions were rather more adequately transmitted over time, had seven titles. Six publications were devoted to Le Van Duyet, a distinctly secondary historical figure who had helped Gia Long establish and consolidate the Nguyen dynasty. This is largely explained by his association with the region of the Mekong delta, a sentiment consciously fostered by some wealthy Cochinese landowners with approval from the French. Going a bit further, however, the fact that Le Van Duyet's tomb had been flattened by Gia Long's son, Minh Mang, in retaliation for the actions of others occurring after his death had long been considered a prime example of royal immorality. Recalling this episode poignantly was thus a device for raising ethical issues in general and criticizing Nguyen monarchs in particular. Indeed, one author took the next logical step and included Le Van Khoi, adopted son of Le Van Duyet and one of the leaders of an uprising against Minh Mang (hence the tomb incident), in his roster of 'southern' heroes. He hinted that the causes of revolt had been mandarinal oppression and court obscurantism. Contemporary political implications were not left in doubt when the last pages of the book attacked Bao Dai, the current Nguyen puppet. Part of this was censored.¹⁶

Le Loi, victor over the Ming and founder of the Le dynasty (1428-1788), was the object of four biographies or biographical dramas, while Ly Thuong Kiet, eleventh century Vietnamese commander against the Sung armies, was the subject of three publications. Traditional resistance to Chinese domination was rounded out with books or pamphlets on Trieu Thi Trinh, Bo Cai Dai Vuong,

¹⁵ If one were to survey Vietnamese periodicals of the same general period with the same intent, the following foreign individuals would surely be added to this list: Pigneau de Behaine (a French bishop who assisted the Nguyen dynasty to power), Baden Powell, Charles Nansen, Woodrow Wilson, Tagore, Anatole France, Hitler, Trotsky, and Mao Tse-Tung.

¹⁶ Vuong Quang, *Viet Nam Danh Tuon* (Saigon, 1928).

Ngo Quyen, Le Hoan, Dinh Tien Hoang, and Quang Trung.¹⁷ It is worth remarking that Vietnamese heroes of this stature were also increasingly being allowed into the carefully screened and approved colonial school texts for children. Why the French permitted any of this is an intriguing question. They must have known that stories of traditional armed resistance to northern colonialists might stimulate opposition to the more immediate Western variety. Perhaps they felt that stressing the 'Chinese threat' together with a strong dose of traditionalist ethics (which, ironically, originated in China), was the best available antidote for contemporary 'red' doctrines or any other radical influences emanating from Canton, Shanghai or Peking. This may also help to explain why the censors in 1926 allowed three instant biographies of Phan Chu Trinh (1872-1926) to be published, even though he had once been sentenced to death for subversive teachings. His consistently non-violent approach might help to head off a new and potentially revolutionary confrontation.¹⁸

If such was the French calculation, it was proven wrong on all counts. Vietnamese Boy Scout troops formed with colonial encouragement in the early 1930s and bearing such glowing names as Hung Vuong (a prehistoric Vietnamese dynasty) or Lam Son (the original guerrilla stronghold of Le Loi), later provided hundreds of healthy, motivated, disciplined cadres for the Viet Minh. A Cub Scout song concluded its account of the crucial thirteenth century naval victory over the Mongols with the following words: 'Oh! brothers and sisters! Even now, whenever one goes on the Bach Dang river, does anyone forget?'¹⁹ From 1935 censorship restrictions were eased enough to allow publication of a number of biographies dealing sympathetically if still cautiously with Vietnamese who had fought the French only decades earlier. Most popular was Hoang Hoa Tham (De Tham), the stubborn Yen The guerrilla leader finally killed in 1913 after more than twenty years of overt and covert resistance.²⁰ Others given some biographical attention included Hoang Dieu, Ton That Thuyet, King Ham Nghi, Phan Dinh Phung, and Luong Ngoc Quyen, the latter having been killed as recently as 1917.²¹ Six persons who had accepted foreign involvement or

¹⁷ For striking visual evidence of 19th and 20th century attraction to heroes of this nature, see M. Durand, *Imagerie Populaire Vietnamienne* (Paris, 1960) pp. 172, 205, 225-36, 412.

¹⁸ In contrast to Phan Chu Trinh, his friendly political opponent, Phan Boi Chau, did not receive book-length biographical treatment until early 1945, by courtesy of a Japanese publishing house in Hanoi.

¹⁹ *Muon Tro Nen Huong Dao Sinh* (Hanoi, 1934). *Hoi Huong Dao Nam Ky, Ky Niem Ngay Dai Hoi Soi Con tai Gia Dinh, 25-12-1942* (Saigon, 1943).

²⁰ Three popularized versions appeared in 1935, the authors of each being careful to draw much of their material from already published sources by French authors. A few years later the Viet-Minh named an armed resistance zone after Hoang Hoa Tham.

²¹ Brief descriptions of the activities of these individuals are available in Marr, page numbers as listed in the index.

intervention received biographical attention at one time or another.²² Indeed, it is a remarkable indication of Vietnamese preoccupations in the decades preceding 1945 that only three full-length biographies were devoted to individuals in no real way linked to the 'foreign question'.²³

Why were biographies so popular? Actually there was a precedent, although how many of the new intelligentsia knew about it is uncertain. In the fourteenth century a Tran dynasty official, Ly Te Xuyen, compiled the *Viet Dien U Linh* (Vietnamese Palace Spirits), a fascinating hodgepodge of stories about long dead military commanders, loyal retainers, local earth and water deities, and apparitions in royal dreams.²⁴ Each spirit discussed by Ly Te Xuyen had already survived at least two centuries due to popular support, court sponsorship, or a combination of both. The Trung sisters were present, as was Bo Cai Dai Vuong, Ly Thuong Kiet and five or six other individuals connected with epic struggles against the foreigner. On the other hand, at least four Chinese colonial officials were remembered favourably (especially Si Nhiep from the first century A.D.), there was praise for a Vietnamese official who allegedly had served Ch'in Shih Huang-ti (r. 221-210 B.C.), and frank admiration for a captured Cham queen who drowned herself rather than marry the Vietnamese king.

What united everyone in the *Viet Dien U Linh* was posthumous power, an ability to protect, to inspire, to urge others to great accomplishments. In this way, for example, a local delta spirit called up effectively by a seventh century T'ang administrator could much later be invoked by Vietnamese commanders as they prepared to attack enemies in the nearby mountains. A number of spirits were known to have proven their potency in the epic thirteenth century confrontation with the Mongols. As centuries passed, the Vietnamese court would raise the honorific titles of some spirits, demote others, add spirits that had been previously overlooked. Didactic stress also changed perceptibly. In 1919 a traditional scholar, Ngo Giap Dau, brought forth yet another compilation of *Viet Dien U Linh* stories, and it seems likely that this was consulted by at least some of the authors of new biographical publications.

The early twentieth century was a time of profound psychological shock and disorientation for many Vietnamese, often summarized in the phrase 'loss of country' (*mat nuoc*). By the mid-1920s, however, writers had managed to shift the emphasis to the positive, to the 'calling up of souls' (*goi hon*), with full knowledge of the popular religious implications of such rhetoric. 'Calling

²² These were: King Gia Long, Vo Tanh, Nguyen Van Tuong, King Dong Khanh, Truong Vinh Ky, and Nguyen Truong To. The latter's position is somewhat ambiguous, since his 1860s memorials proposed short-term foreign involvement as a way, he hoped, of warding off long-term subjugation.

²³ These three were: King Le Thanh Tong (r. 1460-1497), who nevertheless did spend some of his time annihilating the state of Champa; Hai Thuong Lan Ong, an 18th century author of medical treatises; and Nguyen Du, author of *The Tale of Kieu*.

²⁴ Ly Te Xuyen, *Viet Dien U Linh* (Hanoi, Van Hoc, 1972). Trinh Dinh Ru, the translator from Chinese, and Dinh Gia Khanh, the current editor, consulted 8 different texts dating from 1771 onward.

up souls' meant above all the search for heroes, old and new, Vietnamese and foreign. Not just any heroes, but activists, men and women who had seen a need and proceeded to do something about it. Most prized of all were those individuals who had demonstrated great courage against seemingly insurmountable odds. Columbus was admired because, against the common grain, he had developed the conviction that the earth was round and then had staked his life on that conviction. He had sailed into the unknown, overcome mutiny among his disbelieving crew, and returned triumphant (albeit not in full circle).²⁵

Young writers of the intelligentsia steadily pushed the argument further, however, often in prefaces or conclusions to particular biographies. Writers would ask bluntly how many readers were prepared to follow the heroic example of a Le Loi, a Garibaldi or a Pilsudski and seize independence for their country. If readers were dedicated enough, and if they banded together tightly, surely nothing could stop them.²⁶ 'We ourselves are the deities, the spirits (*ong than*) who will determine our own fortune or misfortune', one writer intoned.²⁷ Another, who soon after became a well-known Indochinese Communist Party essayist, summarized the point by quoting la Fayette to the effect that: 'A country that desires Liberty, have the People want it and that will be sufficient'.²⁸ Nevertheless, effort still preceded accomplishment, such that two other writers were led to cite Lord Nelson and Abraham Lincoln as the most pertinent examples for young Vietnamese of the late 1920s. Although their actions had made victory possible, they had died violently before personally being able to savour the fruits.²⁹ As it became apparent by 1929 that thousands of Vietnamese took these models seriously, and were prepared to be jailed or even to die in following them, the colonial authorities banned at least thirty biographies published in the previous four years.³⁰ This led one journal to complain about the government both blocking Vietnamese from their own history and limiting them to French history. The editors added sarcastically that the authorities had better go further and excise 'those most glorious chapters, the Revolutionary accomplishments of the French people'.³¹

²⁵ Tran Minh Khiem, *Vuot Bien Ra Khoi* (Saigon, 1928).

²⁶ See, for example, Duong Ba Trac, *Tieng Goi Dan* (Hanoi, 1925) pp. 5, 17, 24, 81-2, 100. Pham Quynh, on viewing the Pantheon statue of St Genevieve (who fought Attila the Hun), argued that the elder Trung sister had equal meaning to the Vietnamese and deserved equivalent artistic representation. *Nam Phong*, 73 (1923) p. 15.

²⁷ Tran Tuan Khai, *Hon Tu Lap* (Hanoi, 1926) Vol. I, (Gandhi).

²⁸ Hai Trieu, *Muon thi Duoc: Ai-nhi-lan Cach-Mang Luoc Su* (Gia Dinh, 1928).

²⁹ Lam Van Ly and Tran Huy Lieu, *Anh Hung Yeu Nuooc: Ong Nap Nhi Ton* (Saigon, 1928).

³⁰ Trung-Ky Bao-Ho, *Nghi-Dinh Cam cac thu Sach va cac thu Bao, Chi Khong duoc truyen ba, phat mai va tang tru trong hat Trung-ky* (Hue, 1929).

³¹ Phu Nu Tan Van, 49 (1930) p. 8.

In retrospect, many Vietnamese writers have judged such preoccupation with individual will, or even a collective attack based solely on psychological readiness, to be at best a naive if perhaps necessary phase, at worst potentially self-destructive. It was naive because it ignored differences of space and time. For example, if young Vietnamese had bothered to investigate Josef Pilsudski further, one prominent Vietnamese Marxist historian has opined, they would have found that he represented Polish landlord and bourgeois interests against Polish peasants and workers, and that he took help from Western countries as part of the overall imperialist effort to isolate the Soviet Union. Glorification of will power was potentially self-destructive because it put a premium on grand gestures — for example assassinations or attempted coups, necessarily the work of an elite, clandestine apparatus — thus inevitably downgrading ideology, proselytizing, training, public demonstrations and strikes. Finally, it left little room for analysing historical trends, domestic or international, for weighing advantages and disadvantages of various actions at any given time.³² In short, fascination with the power of the will led all too often to adventurism.³³

Even in the late 1920s, however, all was not epic biography and psychological uplift. As can be seen from the table, diverse local histories and geographies were coming out, often sponsored by local French administrators or wealthy Vietnamese grouped together in educational societies. Traditional Vietnamese literary works enjoyed great popularity up to 1930, often being published in runs of 3,000-5,000 copies. After 1930 they were outshone by the new creative poetry, novels, short stories and critical essays of young contemporary authors. Yet all the traditional works listed in the table remained familiar to Vietnamese, if not from printed versions then because of the many adaptations for the stage (*cheo*, *tuong*, *cai-luong*) that had grown up. After 1945, and especially after 1954, full-length editions were reprinted in both Hanoi and Saigon.

Luc Van Tien, composed just prior to French occupation of the Mekong delta by the blind scholar-poet Nguyen Dinh Chieu, whom we have met before, had the curious distinction of being both avidly promoted by the colonial authorities and retaining considerable popularity among Vietnamese patriots. The former saw it as the epitome of Neo-Confucian morality, which in many ways it was. The latter focused on the particular message of fidelity and sacrifice for a just cause. Besides, it was beautiful poetry and the man who created it had tried to live by what he preached.³⁴ By contrast, French and

³² Tran Van Giau, II, pp. 545-600, has perhaps the most detailed analysis of this overall question as it relates to the 1920s.

³³ Oddly enough, at one point a major journal controlled by the French authorities printed an article lauding power of the will as exemplified by four contemporary personalities: Lenin, Mussolini, d'Annunzio, and Kemal Attaturk. *Nam Phong*, 72 (1923) pp. 471-80. By the early 1930s neither the French nor most Vietnamese were making that kind of mistake.

³⁴ Tran Nghia, 'Nhin lai viec su dung noi dung *Luc Van Tien* duoi thoi Phap Thuoc', *Tap Chi Van Hoc*, 1(1965) pp. 57-65.

collaborator Vietnamese attempts to appropriate for their own purposes the even more popular *Truyen Kieu* (The Tale of Kieu) by Nguyen Du met stubborn opposition from Ngu Duc Ke, Huynh Thuc Khang and other patriotic literati. Nobody really doubted the beauty, the stunning imagery of Nguyen Du's poetry, and thus its seemingly endless attraction. But each wanted to be able to draw his own moral and political lessons from it.³⁵

Debates on Vietnamese History

The *Truyen Kieu* debate was a warmup for wider-ranging literary debates in the 1930s on the theme of idealism versus realism and art-for-art's-sake versus art-for-life's-sake, not to mention intricate argument over acceptable literary forms and authentic language development. Throughout this period novelists, poets, political essayists and social critics all enjoyed more attention and sparked off more controversy than writers of history. Nevertheless, history was hardly ignored, and by the early 1940s there was a clear resurgence of interest in specifically Vietnamese historical events and interpretations of the past.

The one historical topic that concerned almost everyone from the first years of the twentieth century onwards was whether the French had entered and remained in Vietnam as friends or as foes. Even a cursory review of publications in the 1912-1944 period reveals a fundamental cleavage on that issue. In the history texts employed in Catholic schools, for example, King Tu Duc was pictured as undeserving of the throne in traditional ethical terms, the French were described as heroic liberators, and those Vietnamese who chose to resist were labelled aggressive pirates (*giac*), spurious elements (*dang nguy*) or perpetrators of disorder (*loan*). The Vietnamese people at large were said to be deeply appreciative of the hospitals, schools and railroads bestowed on them by the beneficent foreigner.³⁶ By contrast, towards the end of a half-poetic, half-narrative account of traditional Vietnamese resistance to foreign intervention, another author managed to slip in the following passage:

The French forces suddenly, without provocation, came and destroyed our fortresses, stole our country, made us lose many soldiers and commanders, and caused our people to cry out in confusion. Surely that is reason enough for us to consider them major enemies!³⁷

³⁵ For a discussion of some of the debates over this work, see J. Chesneaux and G. Boudarel, 'Le Kim Van Kieu et l'esprit public Vietnamien aux XIX^e et XX^e siècles' in *Melanges Sur Nguyen Du* (Paris, 1966) pp. 153-92.

³⁶ E. Quyen, *Su Ky Nuoc Annam* (Qui Nhon, 1930, 6th printing) pp. 90-117.

³⁷ Nghiem Xuan Lam, *Loi Nuoc Non* (Hanoi, 1926) p. 45. The front cover of this publication has a penned notation and signature indicating that it was looked over by someone in the 'First Bureau, First Section' of the French administration.

Numerous other examples of this starkly conflicting vision of French colonial penetration and rule could be cited. It is worth remarking, however, that diverse students of recent Vietnamese history apparently never sat down to argue the merits of each other's positions on the colonial question, and then put their ideas together under one cover. Part of the problem was censorship, of course. Nevertheless, such a hypothetical book might have been passed in 1925-1928, and it almost surely could have been published in 1935-1938. We must tentatively conclude that one side or the other, perhaps both, did not consider the effort worth while. So sharp were the emotional and intellectual differences that communication was not possible.

For one moment, in 1935, there was a minor exchange concerning King Ham Nghi's flight from Hue in 1885 and his direct participation in the Can Vuong resistance. After one author had lauded this action in a partly fictional biography of Ham Nghi, another author went to the trouble of publishing a pamphlet arguing that the biography was unscholarly, that it 'soiled Vietnam's history', and that, in any event, it was silly and stupid for the Can Vuong to spill blood resisting the French. Ngo Tat To (1894-1954), who wrote about Vietnamese history prolifically but who was to become famous as an anti-feudal novelist, entered the fray and lifted the question beyond the motives or actions of a young monarch and a few mandarins hiding in the hills. Someday, when it was possible to write patriotic history without restriction, he intimated, researchers would demonstrate how the anti-French struggle was widespread in the late 1880s, and not just the work of a former palace elite. However, he also repeatedly stressed the objective futility of Vietnamese with spears fighting foreigners with rapid-fire rifles and mobile artillery, or, as he phrased it, of 'eggs going up against stone'.³⁸

From the early Nguyen dynasty onward there had existed the awkward historiographical question of how to treat the late eighteenth century peasant-oriented Tay Son movement and the short-lived dynasty established by one of its leaders, Quang Trung (Nguyen Hue). Strict attention to national chronology, long a function of court historians and inevitably tied to matters of dynastic mandate, would seem to have required acceptance of Tay Son legitimacy for at least the period 1789-1802. However, such was Nguyen hatred of the Tay Son, such was their lingering fear of the social forces involved, that court historians were ordered to label them outright usurpers. On the other hand, to play down the massive Tay Son victory over the invading Ch'ing, Nguyen historians cited moral and cosmological indications that the old Le dynasty, which the Ch'ing were professing to uphold, was undeserving of further popular backing and had in fact lost the mandate of Heaven. Where the mandate resided for thirteen years remained deliberately unclear.³⁹

³⁸ Phan Tran Chuc, *Vua Ham Nghi* (Hanoi, [1935]); Nguyen Trieu Luat, *O Phan Tran Chuc boi nho Quoc Su* (Hanoi, 1935); Ngo Tat To and L.T. Sinh, *Vua Ham Nghi* (Hanoi, 1935); Ngo Tat To (comp.), *Nhung Tran Do Mau Hoi Nguoi Phap Moi Sang Ta* (Hanoi, 1935).

³⁹ Tran Van Giau, I, pp. 181, 202-5. However, the author does cite one occasion when Gia Long, having to explain why he himself had not restored the Le as he too originally promised, stated flatly that he had taken the mandate from the Tay Son and not the Le.

Interestingly enough, modernizing scholar-gentry of the first two decades of the twentieth century seem to have missed the important social and political lessons contained in the Tay Son experience. Perhaps the Nguyen court historians had done their work well, perhaps peasant uprisings were still too unsettling for even the likes of Phan Boi Chau. At any rate, even into the early 1920s books continued to canonize Gia Long and his commanders, especially Le Van Duyet and Vo Tanh, while either ignoring or denigrating the Tay Son. Often there was a quaint new twist. Unlike nineteenth century Nguyen histories, which tended to be militantly anti-Christian, most texts of the first half of the colonial period directed lavish praise towards Pigneau de Béhaine, Bishop of Adran, for his assistance to Gia Long (Nguyen Anh) against the Tay Son. The story of Pigneau taking Gia Long's son and heir, little Prince Canh, to France for an audience at the soon-to-vanish court of Versailles was romanticized into an allegory on contemporary French tutorship and eternal Vietnamese loyalty. It was the perfect historical vignette for French purposes, complete with Canh's Confucianist respect for his foreign teacher and Gia Long's later sorrow that neither of them quite lived to share in his victory.⁴⁰

By the mid-1920s, however, it was impossible to sustain this image. 'Franco-Vietnamese collaboration' was under increasing political challenge, the search for alternative visions of the world well under way. In the historical realm, an important early nineteenth century non-court historical narrative devoting considerable attention to Tay Son success in attracting popular support and driving out the Ch'ing was translated into *quoc-ngu* and published.⁴¹ To make sure that the popular, anti-colonial implications were appreciated, the twentieth century translator added both a preface and a postscript reinforcing precisely these points. Perhaps anticipating this book, a well-known literatus, Le Du, wrote an article calling for an end to the 'spurious' (*nguy*) title in front of everything pertaining to the Tay Son. He lavished praise on Quang Trung as an invincible military commander, masterful diplomat, and domestic reformer comparable to twentieth century leaders in 'civilized' (*van minh*) countries. If Quang Trung had not died prematurely, Le Du asserted, Vietnam would have got back some northern border territories lost to China in earlier centuries.⁴²

⁴⁰ Le Van Thom, *Gia Long Phuc Quoc* (Saigon, 1914) is quite straightforward in stating that the French administrator and historian, P. Cultru, suggested to him the idea of proving the 'non-ingratitude' of Gia Long in regard to Pigneau. He also includes a picture of the statue in Saigon of Pigneau sheltering an adoring Canh, which was still in the same place a half-century later. Another publication, a traditional opera (*tuong*) on the Pigneau-Gia Long relationship, has the contemporary message in its title: *Phap Viet Nhut Gia* [French and Vietnamese as One Family] (Saigon, 1918), written by Dang Thuc Lieng and Nguyen Vien Kieu.

⁴¹ Ngo Thoi Chi, *et. al.*, *Hoang Le Nhat Thong Chi* (Hanoi, 1926). A second printing came out the next year. The translator, Cat Thanh, also hoped that the reading of history (as well as natural sciences, ethics and geography) would provide an antidote to romantic, escapist novels and short stories then beginning to flood the market. A 1963 Hanoi retranslation mentions Cat Thanh as completing his version as early as 1912. If so, I have yet to find a published copy of that date.

⁴² So Cuong (Le Du), 'Lich Su Doi Tay Son', *Nam Phong*, 97 (1925) pp. 11-28.

Tran Huy Lieu (1901-1969) lauded Quang Trung's replacement of Chinese writing by Vietnamese *nom* characters, as well as his alleged desire to return to the 'original teachings' of Confucius and Mencius.⁴³ Two other historical texts tending to enhance the Tay Son position were translated and published.⁴⁴

By 1930, Quang Trung had been publicly rehabilitated to the extent that it was necessary for the authors of a textbook employed in colonial baccalauréat studies to insert in their fifth printing a completely new section, ranking him among the seven 'great heroes' of Vietnamese history. Since they also retained Gia Long on this same roster, however, the basic question was still avoided.⁴⁵ Tran Trong Kim (1883-1953) – colonial schools inspector, historian, and subsequently prime minister by Japanese fiat for a brief period in 1945 – attempted a rationalization of this equal praise of both houses. By his version of orthodox reckoning the Le dynasty was legitimate until 1788, which necessarily made the Trinh and Nguyen seignorial families usurpers, even though they both stopped short of seizing the throne for themselves. In such times of general disorder, 'kings not acting like kings, subjects not acting like subjects', the Tay Son, as they moved closer to full power, could be considered no worse than the others. However, once the Le king went running to the Chinese for help and once the Ch'ien-lung Emperor sent troops into Vietnam, it was up to someone to throw out both Le pretender and Ch'ing aggressor.⁴⁶ Quang Trung did this and thus was clearly a national hero and legitimate dynastic founder, on a par with Dinh Tien Hoang and Le Loi. After his premature death, nevertheless, serious corruption and disorder occurred in Tay Son ranks. Thus it was, according to Tran Trong Kim, that the ordinary people looked anxiously for better leadership, so that they 'could work and live in peace'. Because he fulfilled this fundamental need, Gia Long was able to fight his way northward (admittedly with French assistance), found his dynasty in 1802, and be remembered as the reunifier of Vietnam.⁴⁷

⁴³ Tran Huy Lieu, *Mot Bau Tam Su* (Saigon, 1927) p. 12. Several years later the author joined the Indochinese Communist Party, was Minister for Information and Propaganda in the first DRVN government (1945), and subsequently became Director of the Historical Institute and editor of the main historical research journal.

⁴⁴ One was the *Dai Nam Quoc Su Dien Ca* (Hanoi, 1926), an historical narrative in poetic form. A better organized and annotated version was published in Saigon in 1931, with a printing of 5,000 copies. Although a 19th century court-initiated work, it still contained a passage describing the Tay Son mass mobilization and victory over the Ch'ing. The other text was titled *Thanh Khi Tuong Cau* (Hanoi, 1928). The translator, Ton Quang Phiet (1900-1973), commented that in the face of events described therein it was completely wrong to label the Tay Son a 'spurious dynasty'. He was later a member of the Standing Committee of the DRVN National Assembly and Secretary-General of the Vietnam-China Friendship Association.

⁴⁵ Phan Ke Binh and Le Van Phuc, *Nam Hai Di Nhan Liet Truyen* (Hanoi, 1930, fifth printing). The other five 'great heroes' were Trung Trac, Bo Cai Dai Vuong, Dinh Tien Hoang, Ly Thai To, and Le Loi.

⁴⁶ As Prof. O. Wolters has pointed out earlier in this book, Le Van Huu in 1272 also argued that any Vietnamese ruler who opens the frontiers to China must be replaced.

⁴⁷ Tran Trong Kim, *Viet-Nam Su Luoc* (Saigon, 1958, sixth printing) pp. 367-9, 385-405. First published in Hanoi, about 1928.

In 1932 single-minded Gia Long advocates returned to the fray, publishing a musical drama (*cai luong*) spiced with battles against the Tay Son and featuring a touching scene of Gia Long giving his son Canh to Pigneau.⁴⁸ Several years later this was countered with an historical novel centring on Quang Trung throwing out the Ch'ing.⁴⁹ At the level of historical scholarship, however, perhaps the key blow was struck in 1944 by Hoa Bang, with his widely read book not only describing the actions of Quang Trung and his immediate associates, but trying to place everyone within the military and diplomatic context of that period.⁵⁰ It was a reasonably competent history, rather than simply a biographical panegyric. Nevertheless, the polemic over Quang Trung and Gia Long flared up once again in the 1960s, in the form of a fascinating argument in print conducted across the seventeenth parallel between the editorial secretary of the Historical Institute in Hanoi and a Catholic priest and teacher in Hue.⁵¹ Not long after the 1975 liberation of Saigon, Gia Long Avenue was changed to Ly Tu Trong Avenue, to commemorate a young Indochinese Communist Party cadre executed in 1931. The symbolism was almost as obvious as the changing of John F. Kennedy Square to Paris Commune Square.

Meanwhile, having settled in 1940-1941 on a strategy of peasant mobilization and people's war, there was more that Vietnamese Marxist-Leninists could gain from the Tay Son experience than simply another anti-colonial hero. To some degree the Tay Son came to be regarded as proto-revolutionary, in the manner of Chinese Communist Party interpretations of the Taiping upheaval over half a century later. The reactionary Nguyen and the imperialist French were said to have thwarted momentous social and economic changes, of which the Tay Son were only a part. Tay Son cultural sensitivities were given special attention, their emphasis on popular traditions and full conversion to an orally linked script being considered vital precedents. Most important, however, were the military lessons. There seems little doubt that Vo Nguyen Giap (b.1911), having by the late 1930s both taught history and examined peasant conditions and attitudes in some detail, saw the Tay Son as a specifically Vietnamese example of what could be accomplished if one combined a mass political base

⁴⁸ Tan Dan Tu and Phan Van Trinh, *Gia Long Tau Quoc* (Saigon, 1932).

⁴⁹ Nguyen Tu Sieu, *Viet-Thanh Chien Su* (Hanoi, 1935-1936). Serialized in ten parts, each costing three xu.

⁵⁰ Hoa Bang (Hoang Thuc Tram), *Quang Trung Nguyen Hue: Anh Hung Dan Toc* (Hanoi, 1944). In a third edition, published in 1950 in the French-controlled zone, the author found it necessary to add a special preface denying that he was preaching war or supporting one dynasty over another. After a brief period as 'citizen Vinh Thuy' in the DRVN, the last Nguyen king, Bao Dai, had again become the French puppet.

⁵¹ See especially, Nguyen Phuong, *Bach Khoa* (Saigon), 148/149 (1963); and Van Tan, *Nghien Cuu Lich Su* (Hanoi), 51 (1963) pp. 3-11.

with tactics of surprise, flexibility, and strategic momentum.⁵² On the other hand, the Tay Son had eventually been defeated, so that Vo Nguyen Giap and other members of the intelligentsia turned military commanders were not foolish enough to model their operations slavishly upon them, and indeed probably learned more from trial and error than from any books, Vietnamese or Western.

History as Process

While the search for heroes occupied front stage, another type of historically oriented publication was marching in from the wings. Here the emphasis was on impersonal forces, on broad shifts in human history. Although some writers tried to assume a posture of scientific detachment, the underlying objective was obviously to add new conceptual weapons to the contemporary Vietnamese armoury. They had taken to heart Marx's injunction that the purpose of studying history was in order to change it. As it turned out, the timing was appropriate for grand designs, what with the Russian Revolution, Great Depression, Sino-Japanese conflict, and outbreak of World War II all occurring in a period of twenty-three years. By 1939-1941 Vietnamese intellectuals had not really had enough time to apply systematically these new subject categories and periodic models to their own history and society. But, as the entire world exploded, some had the mental tools to position Vietnam accurately in that maelstrom and to fashion relevant strategies.

One of the most extraordinary initiatives occurred in the late 1920s in the very bastion of cultural conservatism, the royal capital of Hue. There Dao Duy Anh (b.1905) and a few associates prepared and published nineteen provocative books ranging in topic from modern psychology, economics, sociology, anthropology, political science and law, to detailed discussions of Lamarck, Darwin, Comte, Marx and H.G. Wells.⁵³ At the end of most texts was a glossary with concise new Vietnamese definitions for such terms as 'consciousness', 'class', 'objective', 'subjective', 'ideology', 'economic aggression', and 'proletariat'. Reading through these books decades later the excitement of the authors remains palpable, even when they were simply translating or summarizing the arguments of others. Their intent was to sweep in as wide a circle as possible, then to start bringing things closer to home with studies of religion, nationalities (*dan toc*) and imperialism. They got that far when they were shut down by the colonial authorities.⁵⁴

⁵² Both General Giap and his key lieutenant, Van Tien Dung (b.1917), have subsequently often referred to the Tay Son experience in their discussions of military strategy. The most comprehensive analysis from a military perspective, however, is Nguyen Luong Bich and Pham Ngoc Phung, *Tim Hieu Thien Tai Quan Su cua Nguyen Hue* (Hanoi, 1971). For an interesting analysis of both Tay Son and Taiping precedents, see A.B. Woodside, *Community and Revolution in Modern Vietnam* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1976) pp. 239-45.

⁵³ A listing of titles is available on the inside cover of Ve Thach (Dao Duy Anh), *Ton Giao* (Hue, 1929).

⁵⁴ This series, going under the Quan Hai Tung Thu label, also included a publication on women's rights activities since the French Revolution, a description of the 1911 Revolution in China, and a loose cultural comparison of 'East' and 'West'.

Dao Duy Anh was given a three year suspended jail sentence, for alleged involvement in clandestine anti-colonial organizing and switched to preparing two highly respected Sino-Vietnamese and Franco-Vietnamese dictionaries. During the Popular Front period (1936-1939), however, he was finally able to publish two thoughtful studies focusing specifically on Vietnamese history and culture. *Viet-Nam Van-Hoa Su Cuong* (An Outline History of Vietnamese Culture) was notable for its treatment of traditional culture as something constantly developing, rather than as some conveniently timeless repository of things either liked or disliked.⁵⁵ The impact of more recent French policies on Vietnamese practices was described as well. While Dao Duy Anh's presentation was far from comprehensive, particularly in the realm of popular culture versus that of the traditional elite, his approach was crisp, and his categories and interpretations were quite different from what Vietnamese had been accustomed to reading only a decade earlier. The twenty-page conclusion to *Viet-Nam Van Hoa Su Cuong* remains one of the most cogent, perceptive statements ever formulated on the cultural postures available to Vietnamese intellectuals in the pre-revolutionary period.

During the previous decade a debate had been going on concerning the relevance of Confucianism to contemporary Vietnam. By 1938, the overall effect had been to reduce Confucianism from the level of either religion or ethical paradigm to a collection of philosophically diverse and historically bound writings and ideas. The next step was to place Confucian thought squarely within a world historical framework, rather than continuing to argue that there was a fundamental difference between 'East' and 'West'. This was accomplished by Dao Duy Anh in 1938 with his *Khong Giao Phe Binh Tieu Luan* (A Critical Discussion of Confucianism). Actually, he had stated the opinion ten years earlier that Confucianism was irrevocably linked with feudalism, so that those who argued for its retention anywhere in the twentieth century were either hopelessly idealistic or reactionary, or both. Now he proceeded to analyse the reasons why Confucianism was doomed, no matter how much proponents tried to salvage it or opponents attacked it. For example, he pointed out the inevitable ideological impact in Vietnam of an expanded money economy, of the growth of new urban centres, of some peasants 'leaving bamboo enclosures and rice paddies' to enter factories, and of women having to 'abandon bedroom nooks and kitchen crannies' to master techniques of survival on the outside world. Even at the royal court in Hue, it had been decided in 1919 to postpone indefinitely the monarch's obeisances at the Temple of Confucius. The reasons given at the time indicated that no one believed any more that such acts would influence external reality, especially the material conditions of the ordinary people. True, some sectors of society continued to call for a 'Confucian revival',

⁵⁵ See bibliographical appendix.

construct their own temples, condemn young people for disrespect, and preach harmonization of Confucian spirit with scientific practice. These efforts were supported by the French colonialists, Dao Duy Anh said, for the same reasons that Chiang Kai-shek worked in China to revive Confucian rituals and ethical principles. Neither would be successful in the long run.⁵⁶

From a philosophical perspective, young Vietnamese students returning from France in the early 1930s had a sharper understanding of Hegel and Marx than did Dao Duy Anh. The moment political circumstances permitted they were explaining the contemporary significance of all this to apparently fascinated intelligentsia and working class audiences in Saigon. This had many consequences, not the least of which was an extended confrontation between idealists of various persuasions and proponents of dialectical materialism.⁵⁷ It was left to a Confucian literatus turned Marxist-Leninist publicist, by the name of Tran Huu Do, to publish the first booklength explanation in Vietnamese of how the dialectic worked in both nature and human affairs, including such down-to-earth examples as the dynamic ecological balance between plants, deer and tigers in Rach-Gia province, or the relationship of fertilizer to rice output to market price in Cho-Lon.⁵⁸

The importance of this new analytical discussion was considerable and was sensed at the time. One journalist pointed out, for example, that only ten years earlier Vietnamese writers had still lumped outside influences together under the poetic but diversionary rubric of 'European rains and American winds', whereas now (1933) they approached events in terms of struggle, imperialism, international markets and economic depression. That was progress, he said, and there would be more of it.⁵⁹ Remarkably few Vietnamese drew a lesson of historical determinism from all this, however. Perhaps the closest was Dao Duy Anh with his assumption that feudalism was inevitably dead or dying in Vietnam. Even he devoted the last paragraphs of his book on Confucianism to a resounding call to young people to study the subject carefully, since, although it was no longer an appropriate motivating ideology, its effects were still powerful and would have to be reckoned with. More generally, he argued, 'If we wish to perceive clearly our position and responsibilities in today's society we have no choice but to research the history of our society'. He particularly criticized those contemporaries who thought that old Western philosophies were significant but not old Eastern philosophies:

⁵⁶ Dao Duy Anh, *Khong Giao Phe Binh Tieu Luan* (n.p., 1938) pp. 132-52.

⁵⁷ One of the best surviving records of this confrontation is contained in *Phu Nu Tan Van*, beginning with issue no. 198 (4 May 1933) and continuing intermittently until the journal was closed at the end of 1934. Phan Khoi defended the idealist position most often, while Phan Van Hum and Hai Trieu (Nguyen Khoa Van) mounted the dialectical materialist offensive.

⁵⁸ Tran Huu Do, *Bien Chung Phap* (Saigon, 1936). 2,000 copies. Two additional studies on 'historical materialism' and 'social philosophy' were advertised, but I have been unable to locate them.

⁵⁹ *Phu Nu Tan Van*, 232 (18 January 1933).

They know Plato and Aristotle well, they memorize Thomas Aquinas, they are infatuated by Pascal and Descartes, but they don't think they need to study Sakyamuni, Lao-tzu or, above all, Confucius. They don't sense that what they idolize and preach under the label of 'humanism' is in fact the ideology of the old [Western] aristocracy and power elite, no more relevant to contemporary Vietnamese than the 'humanism' of Confucianism belonging to the old [Eastern] ruling monarchs and officials!⁶⁰

The Synthesis of the 1940s

It is worth noting that none of the ancients mentioned above were Vietnamese. This was characteristic, and it provided both an opportunity and a dilemma for Dao Duy Anh's generation. On the one hand, not having any primordial links with the philosophical founding fathers, Vietnamese might experience less difficulty in breaking with the past. They might identify themselves more readily with twentieth century doctrines and turn their attention to the future. Many Vietnamese intellectuals attempted to do this, with varying degrees of success.

On the other hand, even the most modern, future-directed individual can begin to feel uncomfortable without a past, without roots. The problem multiplied as intellectuals went to the countryside, where more than ninety per cent of the people still lived, and tried to proselytize. Intellectuals found that although peasants were quite capable of understanding new concepts, the effort had to be undertaken in their language, their frame of reference. It was futile for leftist intellectuals simply to quote Hegel, Marx or Lenin to a group of peasants, and even more so for rightists to cite Bergson, Maurras or Claudel. Besides, it was becoming increasingly obvious that none of those foreigners had studied the particular conditions of Vietnam. To apply them mechanically was foolish, in some cases dangerous. In short, any intellectual who intended to influence the future course of Vietnamese history — and that certainly was the stated desire of most — had to do more than personally cast Confucius, Buddha and Lao-tzu out of the temple. He had to try to understand popular attitudes, of whatever origins, before he could hope to communicate, much less attempt to change those attitudes significantly.

I think this helps to explain the surge of interest in Vietnamese history and culture that occurred from 1940 onward. Of course, another factor was Japanese-Vichy administrative tolerance of publications on these subjects, whereas more overtly political works were subject to the most strict censorship ever. Then, too, there was the concern among a number of intellectuals that Vietnam's past was in danger of being lost, not just the epic deeds of a few heroes, now well disseminated, but the thousands of manuscripts written in characters that

⁶⁰ Dao Duy Anh, *Khong Giao*, pp. 150-2.

fewer and fewer Vietnamese could read. Ngo Tat To, for example, fearing that soon there would be nobody able to penetrate ancient texts, published annotated *quoc-ngu* translations of surviving literature of the Ly (A.D. 1010-1225) and Tran (A.D. 1225-1400) dynasties.⁶¹ Others employed by the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient* (EFEO) came to realize that very little of the original research and compilation done there was having any impact on the Vietnamese people. They joined with others to publish the weekly journal *Tri Tan* (To Know The New), to expand free education classes, and even to form the clandestine 'Vietnamese National Salvation Culture Association' (*Hoi Van Hoa Cuu Quoc*), an affiliate of the Viet-Minh.⁶²

Ho Chi Minh (1890-1969), after thirty years abroad, in early 1941 was finally able to return secretly to Vietnam to lead the Indochinese Communist Party in forming the Viet-Minh front. The momentous decision was made to place 'nation above all', to defer all particular class demands that might impede achievement of independence and freedom. 'If we do not resolve the problem of national liberation', the ICP Central Committee warned, 'then not only will the entire people of our nation continue to live as animals, but also the particular interests of individual classes will not be achieved for thousands of years either.'⁶³ From this strategic position many things flowed, not least of which was a different Party attitude towards Vietnamese history and culture. Thus we see Ho Chi Minh immediately setting the tone by pounding out on his portable typewriter a poem entitled 'The History of Our Country from 2879 B.C. to 1942', emphasizing resistance to foreign aggression and, above all, the peasant-based Tay Son defeat of the Ch'ing. Other poems followed on geographical themes, both national and provincial. At the same time, however, Ho Chi Minh translated (from Chinese) a history of the Communist Party of the USSR and prepared two guerrilla warfare manuals based on his recent Yenan experiences. All were meant to be used in the first instance to teach cadres, but the poems could also be circulated orally.⁶⁴

Nowhere was the shift more dramatic than in interpretations writers affiliated to the Viet-Minh now gave to *The Tale of Kieu*. Brandished by conservative collaborators in the 1920s and wept over by young individualist romantics in the 1930s, *Kieu* now was given anti-imperialist attributes. For example, Hoai Thanh (b.1909), who in the 1930s had been severely attacked by

⁶¹ Ngo Tat To, *Van Hoc Doi Ly* and *Van Hoc Doi Tran* (Hanoi, 1941). He also translated the ancient Chinese *Book of Changes* into Vietnamese.

⁶² *Tri Tan*, focusing on Vietnamese history and culture, was begun in Hanoi in 1941, and included the following very diverse set of participants: Hao Bang, Tran Van Giap, Duong Quang Ham, Nguyen Van To, Nguyen Huy Tuong, Nguyen Dinh Thi, Dao Duy Anh, Hoang Thieu Son, Le Thuoc and Phan Van Hum.

⁶³ Tran Huy Lieu, et. al., *Lich Su Tam Muoi Nam Chong Phap* (Hanoi, 1958) Vol. II, p. 70.

⁶⁴ Phan Ngoc Lien, 'Tim Hieu ve Cong Tac Van Dong . . .', *Nghien Cuu Lich Su* (March-April 1973) pp. 13-21, 30; Vu Anh, 'From Kunming to Pac Bo', *Days With Ho Chi Minh* (Hanoi, 1962) p. 176; Woodside, pp. 220-5.

Marxists as an idealist for positing a world of culture beyond 'mundane' economic existence and conflict, now was endorsed when he represented the rebel leader (and Kieu's lover), Tu Hai, as a model of timeless Vietnamese heroism. More than that, the poem's author, Nguyen Du, was said to have 'overcome the obstacles between past and present', even though great material and spiritual changes had occurred in the 130 year interim. Hence Hoai Thanh's conclusion:

And, so it seems we are not so lost after all. Behind us we have the immense history of our people. Between us and that immense history there is still a road we can travel, still spiritual cords attaching us. Because we can still love Nguyen Du we are not yet in the position of abandoned children in a strange country. We can share our happiness and sadness, our hopes and dreams, with someone in the past.⁶⁵

For all that, knowledge that Nguyen Du had been a feudal Confucian mandarin was still troubling. More representative, therefore, were Viet-Minh efforts to identify themselves with the people and utilize folksongs, peasant aphorisms and popular festivals and rituals. For example, the young activist writer Nguyen Dinh Thi (b.1924) attempted by means of traditional folk materials to demonstrate an essentially optimistic, struggle-oriented, patriotic Vietnamese peasant character regardless of time and place. Some of the pitfalls of this approach were evident in the snatches of poetry that Nguyen Dinh Thi cited to prove personality traits. Thus, poems praying for rain were said to demonstrate profound peasant understanding of nature. The tendency of oral literature to 'modify' sad or distasteful historical facts was a form of peasant optimism, of refusing to accept fate blindly. When the author summarized his argument, nevertheless, he talked of the need to 'look life straight in the eye, to perceive exactly the problems that need solving, and then to vault into life . . .', language that would not have been used thirty years earlier by any Vietnamese.⁶⁶

Much of the Viet-Minh effort was a conscious pouring of new wine into old bottles, a metaphor in fact used by more than one subsequent Party analyst. This involved selective redemption of the past, salvaging of some bottles, bypassing of others. Thus, while Vietnamese resistance to foreign intervention was declared the glorious, continuous thread linking all epochs and all classes, there was little discussion of the millenium of successful Chinese control, the bitter internal wars, the near annihilation of the Cham, or the ability of foreigners repeatedly to find Vietnamese collaborators. When such matters had

⁶⁵ Hoai Thanh, 'Mot Phuong Dien Cua Thien Tai Nguyen Du: Tu Hai', *Hop Thuyen Tho Van Viet-Nam* (Hanoi, 1963) Vol. V, pp. 506-16. Originally published in *Thanh Nghi*, 36 (1943). As of 1963, Hoai Thanh was General Secretary of the Vietnam Literature and Art Union.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 517-30. Nguyen Dinh Thi in 1963 was General Secretary of the Vietnam Association of Writers.

to be raised, they were treated as feudal episodes, historically bound. Vietnamese heroes as historical entities were praised as never before, but the 'actions' of their posthumous spirits were either relegated to the museum category of 'feudal superstition' or treated as symbolic reflections of continuing popular respect. Significantly, this was a reversal of the fourteenth century *Viet Dien U Linh*, which judged individuals primarily on their posthumous powers and thus included a number of spirits which appeared to have had insignificant temporal lives.

Nevertheless, the human mind is not a collection of wine and bottles. Or, to demonstrate the ultimate inadequacy of the metaphor, one may say that no conceptual wine is ever entirely new, since the act of linguistic transfer involves accommodation. And no cultural bottle remains entirely inert, but rather works its chemistry on the wine to some degree or another. Finally, both wine and bottles exist in a constantly changing environment, the river of time that Heraclitus spoke of so long ago, so that, even if for some reason their chemistry remains reasonably stable, the external conditions existing when the bottle is opened and the wine drunk is surely a critical factor in determining the value of the experience.

I suspect that many of the Vietnamese intellectuals studied here came to appreciate the intricacy of problems of historical continuity and change rather more acutely than most of us, living as we do in circumstances seldom demanding conscious, critical choice among competing values. I also think they manage to communicate some of that appreciation to the larger Vietnamese public, although I have not tried to demonstrate that here. What remains questionable is the degree to which these intellectuals, now mostly in their sixties and seventies, have succeeded in conveying that insight to subsequent generations, particularly young men and women born after 1945. It may be that the anti-imperialist concentration on a timeless Vietnamese spirit and tradition (*truyen thong*), somehow operating outside the historical dialectic, has been so successful that the youth of today are largely unaware of the fundamental analytical difficulties involved. If so, the final anti-imperialist victory of 1975 and the advent of a new developmental phase, with new conceptual problems, provides a fascinating test of Vietnamese capacity to relate to both the universal and the particular in human experience.

**THE ENCHANTMENT OF THE REVOLUTION:
History and Action in an Indonesian Communist Text**

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Long ago, men lived in harmony; they valued justice above all else. Their rulers were honoured as judges, whose decisions all obeyed. But gradually men began to seek not justice but riches, and as some became wealthier than others they grew able to bribe witnesses to cover their crimes, so that justice could no longer be done. From that time, rulers could no longer judge correctly, and the world became governed by greed. Though God sent his Prophet to remind people that the welfare of man should be placed above the welfare of goods, this lesson was soon disobeyed. Rich men, who had time to study the texts while the poor men toiled, became the authorities on religious teaching, and the capitalists paid religious leaders to see that the interests of wealth were placed above those of man. Only in Russia have they outlawed capitalism; it is high time the workers and peasants everywhere recognize its evil, unite against it, and claim their rights.¹

Thus Haji Misbach, a Javanese Communist leader of the 1920s, explained to his followers the origins of inequality, its relationship to state and religious power, and the need for world revolution. A few years later, a fellow-propagandist in West Sumatra placed the Bolshevik Revolution in terms of appropriate and glorious action as follows:

The Communists have seized freedom in Russia. That land is the birthplace of the Communist Party, whose leader is named Lenin. He had an older brother, who was punished in this fashion by the Raja of Russia: the ruler had his legs bound to two horses, and ordered them to gallop in opposite directions, so that his body was torn in two and he died. When the time of revenge came, Lenin seized power with the Communists, took captive the Raja, and slew him. Now Russia is free; everyone is equal there, free from all oppression by the government. Communism has spread over the whole world, for Lenin was not content to liberate his country alone. Now we, in this place, are the last to hear about these things. Soon Lenin will come, and who will survive if he has not joined the party of the revolution? Join then before the reckoning, last of all the earth!²

¹ Haji Misbach, in *Islam Bergerak*, 20 May 1922; as translated in *Overzichten van de Inlandsche en Maleische-Chineesche Pers* 29 (1922) pp. 206-7.

² Speaker at a Communist meeting in Sawah Lunto, West Sumatra, as rendered in an untitled report of the Resident of Sumatra's West Coast, transmitted by the Netherlands Indies Prosecutor-General to the Governor-General, dd. 10 January 1927, No. 39/A.P., no. 1227, pp. 3-7.

In such fashion early Communist disciples located the system for their followers in terms of time, place, and recognizable standards; and so, at the lowest level and on the margins of the movement, propagandists would continue to do. The arguments appear exotic as Marxist-Leninist discourse, but note they are used to carry the central values of freedom for the oppressed, social equality, and the transformation of the world. It is worth bearing this in mind as we look at a text written in a more familiar Communist imagery, which is also concerned with locating the party's struggle in time and place, and which in some ways is more unorthodox in its assumptions.

In March 1954 the fifth congress of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) endorsed a major reformulation of party strategy and also declared the need for a thorough theoretical statement of Communism's role in Indonesia. Three years later, at the central committee session of July 1957, the analysis was presented by party secretary D.N. Aidit and later published as *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution (Masjarakat Indonesia dan Revolusi Indonesia)*. The work contained, as its author elsewhere declared, 'a complete account of the theory of the PKI about the Indonesian revolution'.³ Nearly three-quarters is a history (with a final segment discussing the party's tasks in view of the lessons which history had revealed) but only two paragraphs of the historical account deal in fact with the 'August Revolution' of 1945-49. One reason for this is the essay's particular definition of revolution, a matter we will look into later; another is the peculiar problem of interpretation which the events of the war of independence posed for the PKI leaders of Aidit's time. But before we consider the specific issue of the revolution let us turn to some of the more general features which set Aidit's account off from the early appeals we have paraphrased, for they may help us to understand some of the work's significance as a perception of the Indonesian past and perhaps cause us to reflect on some characteristics of recent Indonesian Communist thought which the superficial familiarity of its formulation may have caused us to overlook.

Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution was the fundamental PKI theoretical work of the 1951-1965 period. However, for a statement which aimed at transforming men's thinking about their condition it began in a most unmoving way:

³ D.N. Aidit, 'Lessons from the History of the CPI', in his *Problems of the Indonesian Revolution* ([Peking], 1963) p. 148. The Indonesian original of Aidit's study was published in Jakarta by Pamburuan (the party publishing house) in 1957; it is also included in Djilid II of his *Pilihan Tulisan* (Jakarta, 1960) pp. 247-300. The English version was issued by Pamburuan in 1958 and is included in Aidit's *Problems*, pp. 5-61. I have used the official translation for references and quotes, substituting 'PKI' for 'CPI' to refer to the Indonesian Communist Party. Hereafter the work is cited as *ISIR*.

The Fifth National Congress of the Communist Party of Indonesia (PKI) held in March 1954 gave the answer to all the important and basic questions of the Indonesian revolution. But up to today, there are still many Party members who do not yet understand clearly what is meant by "the important and basic questions of the Indonesian revolution".

It is important to know the basic problems of our revolution. Knowing the basic problems of the Indonesian revolution means knowing the targets and tasks of the Indonesian revolution, knowing the forces which push it forward, knowing its character and its perspectives. In order to know the basic problems of the Indonesian revolution, we must in the first place know Indonesian society.⁴

Not for Aidit the ringing tones of his predecessors, or for that matter of Marx in his beginning to the Communist Manifesto. Sweeping images, a sense of urgency, relevance to local ways of thought are all buried under an uncompromisingly didactic prose. Though the language is simple, it rigidly excludes those more familiar metaphors which might link its message to most Indonesians' experience. There is no attempt, as in Haji Misbach's version, to establish a resonance between Marxist and Muslim ideas of social justice or — to take another Communist leader of the earlier period — Semaun's references to traditional modes of behaviour to lend weight to his actions. Religion, positively or negatively, is hardly mentioned in Aidit's account, and culture only to show Indonesian unity and originality.

Moreover, the utopian possibilities of the Communist message are markedly restricted. The historical vision is linear, but its emphasis is on the persistence of struggle rather than the imminence of salvation. Primitive Communism, the Eden from which man fell through his seduction by property, is not, as we shall see, the metaphorical base from which Aidit's account proceeds but a point in Indonesia's historical development. The image of world revolution is scarcely called on, either as an apocalypse or as a mighty ally for Indonesia's struggle. Finally, the historical landscape is peopled by abstractions — economic categories, national entities, social forces. Even the work's authorship is subjected to the process of depersonalization, for though Aidit was credited with composing it, he stressed its origin in the decision of the fifth party congress, while an introduction by the agitprop department of the PKI central committee further pointed up the essential inspiration of the work as that of a bureaucratic machine.

⁴ *ISIR*, p. 5.

Are we to assume from this that Indonesian Communists had proceeded so far from the metaphorical world of the early adherents of the movement — or for that matter from the imagery we are most likely to consider humanly stirring — that this was the sort of approach that roused them? The study was destined 'for use in the Party schools at the centre and in the province',⁵ but this did not mean it was intended to instruct adepts in bureaucratic expression. The PKI's educational network was very broad — indeed, this was perhaps the most significant and successful project of the Aidit leadership. Moreover, even at the level of higher party cadres, the number of people with an extensive educational background, political or academic, was small.

By and large, PKI stalwarts of the period were young men of lower middle-class or upper working-class and peasant origin; socially, they were at best on the fringes of the new national elite, and they were uncomfortably aware of their lack of centrality to the urban high culture that centered on Jakarta.⁶ The Communist Party provided them with a way to climb, an alternative source of values and support, and a vehicle for their anger at social injustice. They were eager but had little background; they had risen fast on the basis of revolutionary experience, organizing ability, and emotional commitment rather than mastery of the dialectic. The party was, in fact, notably without an 'intellectual' element; its leaders' interest in high learning was the respect of half-educated men — and also the suspicion, for they were determined to provide an alternative schooling to the Western-minded established one.

Aside from the specific audience for which *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* was intended, we should bear in mind that the work reflected and helped to codify a metaphorical structure that had provided the framework of PKI communication since very early in the Aidit regime. The same vocabulary and imagery were to be found in party publications and speeches at all levels, and it thoroughly pervaded the language of the PKI-sponsored mass organizations as well. We only find it abandoned in campaigning at the most informal level, in the writings of some thoroughly provincial or unorthodox leaders publishing outside the party's central supervision, or in the artistic expression of the Communist message. And yet it was not exclusively the way Communists thought about things. We can see the gulf between official and private vision in the reflections of Sudisman, one of Aidit's closest associates and last survivor of the PKI top leadership after the 1965 coup. He had viewed himself and his colleagues, he said, as the five Pandawa — the heroic brothers of the Mahabharata myth cycle of the *wayang*. Sudisman's speech used an imagery

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 3, introduction by the Agitprop Department.

⁶ For a discussion of this emergent culture and its sources of social support, see H. Geertz, 'Cultures and Communities' in R.T. McVey (ed.), *Indonesia* (New Haven, HRAF, 1963), pp. 33-41.

rich in cultural resonance, clearly representing his deep feelings; but he never would have expressed himself thus publicly in the days of his power.⁷

If there was such a gap between the PKI's imagery and the private parlance of its adherents, then why did the party have so great a following? We might expect it to have remained an urban intellectual sect; but on the contrary, it made great gains in the countryside while other radical movements, using the emotional vocabulary of their setting, dwindled into obscurity. The imagery must therefore have had a meaning to audience as well as to speaker; there must have been a desire, whatever tradition and emotion dictated, to grasp the world in a new way.

Here, it seems to me, lies the central appeal of the Communist message in Aidit's time: it was not so much its radical anti-imperialism or its call for social justice (though it was certainly these things too) as it was its promise that by associating and thinking in a new way one could gain strength and become, in the end, invincible. It attracted people because the new categories of thought and action were ones which they themselves had come to conceive in a general way as legitimate. More particularly, it drew those semi-educated political seekers who were essential in the formation of a cadre and the communication of the party's basic political and economic message to the mass of the population. It provided them with a charter as a counter-elite, a basis on which they could top the post-revolutionary establishment's claims to cultural and social superiority and ultimately the right to rule.

At the lowest level, people were attracted to the movement by its locally apparent economic, cultural, or social connotations, which were often as far afield from what we think of as Communist orthodoxy as were the appeals of Misbach and his West Sumatran colleague. Once drawn to the party, however, they were brought further 'inside' by introduction to the basic mysteries of the new way of thought. Hence the great emphasis on education, even and especially at the simplest level. Those who achieved some mastery found themselves part of a new world, possessors of a knowledge which their fellows did not have, participants in an organizational life which both cut them off from and provided them with support against their usual surroundings, a knowledge which did indeed change their lives.

The essential symbol in this appeal was modernity. A very slippery term, but we can at least be sure the PKI thought of its vision as modern, for this was perhaps the greatest claim which the party made for itself in the 1951-65 period. Along with the Leninist critique of imperialism, Marxism's claim to be the most modern — and thus the most efficacious — of Western political philosophies had

⁷ Speech before the Extraordinary Military Tribunal (Mahmillub), July 1967, published as Sudisman, *Analysis of Responsibility* (translated by B. Anderson) (Melbourne, The Works Cooperative, 1975), p. 4.

been a great source of its appeal to Indonesian nationalists in the colonial period. As a result, nationalist thought had come to be expressed since the 1920s in a largely Marxist vocabulary. Marxist-Leninist categories eventually became *the* modern terms of analysis, which gave the PKI the immense advantage that it could argue that it was merely being consistent in applying them, while the non-Communists wrote apologetics to explain why the class struggle need not take place in Indonesia.

In the 1951-65 period, Indonesians were very conscious of the contrast between *moderen* or *maju* (progressive) and *kolot* or old-fashioned.⁸ For most, *moderen* was a good thing and *kolot* was on its way out. We can see in this the percolation downwards from the left nationalist political elite of a historical optimism which brought with it acceptance of a secularized, industrial world and the idea that socialism and mass democracy were advanced and desirable forms of government. Although the role of the PKI as a representative of modernity differed from one area to another – if there were effective competitors for that part it tended to be identified with the lower classes alone – it drew many of its adherents in the 1951-65 period primarily on this account. In general, this was the basis on which the PKI's model for perception was positively received.

Modernity carried certain connotations, in itself as well as in the particular socio-economic interpretation which Marxism and the PKI gave it. Furthermore, in so far as modernity provided a new framework for seeing the world it tended to exclude other terms of reference even when these still lived on in individuals' emotions. To provide a role for the anomalous concept, even if it had a powerful resonance, would hinder the consolidation of the new thought system, and as long as people were generally open to a new myth and desirous of certitude there was every reason to exclude ideas that did not fit.

Moreover, there were considerations of immediate political and communal rivalries which were often easier to avoid than to tackle. There was no universally honoured cultural tradition or historical state, no really usable past from a national viewpoint. Those former kingdoms, leaders, and events celebrated by modern Indonesian historians – including Aidit in this work – are shards of various pasts strung together by writers in the present. There were thus no established historical objects of veneration on which the PKI could draw when appealing at a national level to give emotional depth to its message.⁹ Or, put another way, there was no powerful and familiar tradition of discourse which

⁸ A good indication of the extent to which these concepts were in use among ordinary people can be found in their employment in the *hudruk* plays of lower-class Surabaya. See J. Peacock, *The Rites of Modernization: Symbolic and Social Aspects of Indonesian Proletarian Drama* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1968).

⁹ In this, the PKI's situation contrasted strongly with that of the Chinese, whose historical and literary traditions have allowed them to carry on major debates on party policy through reference to past example.

might have beguiled the post-revolutionary PKI away from an uncompromising insistence on modernity. Even Islam was subject to too many interpretations and conflicting emotions (aside from the problems which Marxism ultimately raised for religious reference); and as urban secularism grew and religious minorities were attracted to the PKI, such an appeal seemed ever less useful.

All this made for the absence in Aidit's history and other PKI accounts of references to religious or other cultural traditions. They were, among other things, generally conceived as *kolot*. PKI members and even high leaders might cling to them as individuals, but this was a matter for the private reconciliation of realities; the formal model had to aim at clarity. For the earlier PKI myth-makers we have referred to this was not the case: they were not seeking to fix the boundaries of thought but rather to open them up, and for this the relationship of new ideas to old modes of perception was necessary. They were also less self-conscious about expressing themselves in ways not encompassed by the new vocabulary. PKI cadres of a later day were more under the impression of Indonesia's new secular urban high culture, and they also had closer acquaintance with their foreign colleagues' emphasis on highly formalized and 'correct' expression. Here the desire to communicate with the masses battled with the desire to adhere to the polite standards of Marxist-Leninist culture. The result was generally a compromise in which very simple language was used and only the most important and easily apprehended elements in the philosophy were presented, in discourse which held closely to an internationally recognizable Marxist imagery.

The PKI not only summoned a new framework of thought, it called for a new basis of action. Essentially, this was organized action: this was what would turn the age-old balance of power and transform the weak into the strong. Action, moreover, must be persistent; and it was for this reason that Aidit's essay and other PKI writings of the time avoided reference to the messianic elements in either Marxist philosophy or Indonesian history. Current party needs here interplayed with the efforts to construct a model for perceiving the world. Most immediately, the PKI leaders needed to attune their following to a political situation in which they could proceed forward only gradually. More generally, they needed to turn people from the alternation between galvanic action and apathy that had been characteristic of popular participation in politics. Modernity as a magic weapon reversing the balance of power between ruler and ruled is an image likely to arouse extreme expectations followed by sharp disillusionment. The problem had bedevilled Indonesia's first modern mass movement, the Sarekat Islam, and sorely handicapped the development of trade unions in the colonial period; it had been a principal reason why party leaders in the mid-1920s had decided for a hopeless revolt, convinced that suicide was a nobler death for the movement than a slow bleeding-off of its membership.

Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution tried to deal with this problem by stressing the difficulty of the endeavour and its historical depth. Struggle became in fact the central image, a value in itself, a cardinal point of identification:

The Indonesian people is a freedom-loving people with a revolutionary tradition. This has been proven right up to recent centuries, to the 20th century, right up to today. Indonesia's history from early times has been a history of revolutions, a history of the working people. The 20th century is the century in which the struggle of the Indonesian people took on modern forms which are in essence but a continuation of the centuries-long revolutionary traditions.¹⁰

We can see a very similar emphasis on the persistence of struggle in Chinese and Vietnamese Communist exhortations, and for much the same reason: to persuade common folk that, contrary to all their experience, they are invincible, that victory depends on their action, and yet that they must not expect it now or tomorrow, that their way may in fact be paved with sore defeat.

The emphasis, as worked out in PKI policy of the 1951-65 period, was on making people conscious that they should devote themselves to struggle rather than to obedience or the seeking of interior peace; that this was their true nature and duty, and that the appropriate form of struggle was the perfection of thought and organization. Thus in the concluding lines of *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution*, in which Aidit cheered the cadres on to the future, he wrote:

In order to carry out these great and difficult yet glorious tasks, we must struggle on to make our Party a party which covers the entire nation, which has a broad mass character, which is completely consolidated in the ideological, political and organizational sphere. All members of the PKI must take an active part in building such a Party. For such a Party, there is no fortress that cannot be stormed, including the fortress of a Democratic Republic and the fortress of a Socialist Republic.¹¹

¹⁰ *ISIR*, p. 19. 'People' has been substituted for 'nation' in translating *bangsa*. The Indonesian word implies people in the sense of *Volk* rather than 'common people' (which is rendered by *rakyat*).

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 69

The idea of surging forward through consolidation of the *apparat* seems neither very Indonesian nor very inspiring; but under it lay the metaphor that the people were weak because their energies were scattered, that only through the concentration and correct alignment of their thought and action would they become united, focused, and irresistible. This was a familiar and powerful image,¹² and one which the party leaders not only found appropriate to urge on their followers but which seized their own thinking, particularly as other avenues for action became blocked in the 'Guided Democracy' period. As a result, organization became viewed rather as an end in itself, capable of qualitatively changing the situation, a true god from the machine.

This emphasis on organization, on the subordination of the individual to the collective, on the Marxist version of bureaucratic-rational behaviour, also explains the placing of Aidit's study in the context of party decisions. On the one hand the work was ascribed to his hand, as were all the most important statements of the party, for he was its highest authority, and its most weighty utterances must therefore come from his mouth. On the other hand, his statements in this capacity must be thoroughly embedded in the organizational context: in the decisions of a congress, the affirmation of a conference, the imprimatur of the competent party office. The result is a style which is bureaucratic but yet not anonymous, history with neither the facelessness of the chronicler nor the individuality of the historian. It has personality, but it is the character not of a man but of a regime.

We have noted that the basic approach of *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* is historical, and that the great part of it consists of a historical account. To understand why this was so, and why Aidit constructed his history in the way he did, we need to have in mind the function and centrality of the Indonesian Communist concern with the past. The needs and perspectives of today are inescapably present in our inspection of yesterday; but in Marxist thought the relationship between past and present is a peculiarly tense one because it holds that by the application of correct ('scientific') categories to the study of history the meaning of human existence can be understood. Man exists in time, through which he proceeds towards the realization of his true self. Only as he comes to an understanding of his past can he locate the present stage of his journey and know by what means he must travel to reach its end. History thus commands action; but the actor, knowing, can determine history.

This vision gives rise to a dilemma, the outlines of which already appear in Marx's dictum that the point is not to understand history but to change it. Is understanding or action then to have priority? With the deepening involvement of Marxists in political movements and above all with the development of Leninist

¹² For a discussion, see B.R.O'G. Anderson, 'The Idea of Power in Javanese Culture' in C. Holt *et al.* (eds.), *Culture and Politics in Indonesia* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P., 1972) pp. 1-69.

parties claiming a monopoly on correct understanding, the interpretation of the past came not to guide but to legitimate the policies of the present. From the viewpoint of Communist leaders, history became too important to be left to the historians, and the task of research into the past came to be the provision of detail illustrating the fundamental visions of politicians. As leaders rose and fell, so did the historical interpretations they had sponsored, false visions which had led them and the party astray.

It is against this background that Aidit produced his version of Indonesia's past. Closely bound to the needs of the present, it provided the historical armament for the development of a party strategy for a post-revolutionary situation in which nationalist and not Communist forces were dominant. However, this does not mean that it was mere window-dressing. Aidit may have been inspired by his own experience and present needs rather than by archival research or the contemplation of interior truths, and he certainly trimmed the details to suit his purpose. But it is scarcely likely that he would have formulated what he intended as a major statement without feeling that its terms were fundamentally real. Moreover, the history was not intended primarily as an account of events leading to a current situation but rather, for the reasons we have discussed above, as a pattern for organizing thought. It provided a past which was a model for the future not simply in terms of recommended action but in categories of perception, presenting certain ways of looking at things and excluding others. It was thus not intended as a reflection of the way PKI members did look at things, nor was it an attempt to persuade party adherents to action in terms that would galvanize them; rather it was a model, a perceptual goal towards which they were to strive in their thinking about the world.

Events in Aidit's narrative were therefore subordinate to ideas, or rather to the single Idea of shaping a Communist man for whom intellectual apprehension, political action, and ethics were a single piece. It is the style of Isaiah rather than of the Odyssey, in which the foreground of happening is stripped to the minimum necessary to reveal the idea that lies behind and at the heart of all action; it is the vision of the hedgehog rather than the fox.¹³ Ultimately the events that the history deals with are really real only in so far as they illustrate the Idea, and the fact that the text was used to train cadres was all the more reason for it to concentrate on this purpose. It meant, of course, a clear decision in favour of looking at history as the illustration of a grand scheme rather than attempting to discern a pattern from the concatenation of events. Its claims to being 'scientific' lay in its illustration of the grand science that was its philosophy and not in the rigorous application of that system's terms to what was known about the past.

¹³ For the contrast between Old Testament and Homeric Greek style, see E. Auerbach, *Mimesis, the Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (Princeton, Princeton U.P., 1953) ch. 1. 'The fox sees many things but the hedgehog sees one big thing' is a quotation from Archilochus used by Isaiah Berlin as the basis of a comparison of Tolstoy and Dostoevsky in *The Hedgehog and the Fox, An Essay on Tolstoy's View of History* (London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1967).

One clear purpose of *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* was thus to provide a myth of origin for Indonesian society which would lead ultimately and inexorably to the PKI. It was this vision which must engage and give fire to the cadres, the message they should spread abroad to the people. Yet if we look at Aidit's historical account we find something very strange: it does not do this. To discover why, we must first look in brief paraphrase at what it does say:

In the beginning was the territory Indonesia. At the dawn of known history it was inhabited by people who, though 'native' (*asli*, qualified by quotation marks in the original), were not ordained to live always in that place. In due course they were replaced by the folk whose manifest destiny it was to dwell there; one cultural and linguistic stock when they came, their scattering over their homeland's many islands gave rise to Indonesia's later diversity. Their pioneer society was, of necessity, cooperative and egalitarian — primitive communism, in a word — but as life became easier and wealth accumulated, differences in riches and status naturally appeared and became institutionalized in first slave and then feudal systems. Peasants struggled against these systems but were unable to break them. Eventually the colonialists came (their depredations are described in relative detail) and added their burdens to those of the feudal overlords; again, the people struggled, but without avail. At the beginning of this century, however, two new groups emerged as a result of colonial modernization, and these — the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie — began the movement to liberate Indonesia from its chains. Their struggle was started in 1905 with the creation of the first trade union, and led to the founding of Budi Utomo, the Sarekat Islam, and finally the ISDV; the last, having become the PKI, led the independence movement until the crushing of the people's revolt in 1926-27. The Youth Vow (*Sumpah Pemuda*) of 1928 and the *Zeven Provinciën* mutiny of 1933 were the principal events until the coming of the Japanese, whose oppressive rule was marked by many popular uprisings. On the Japanese defeat, the Indonesian people proclaimed national independence; they then had to combat the returning Western imperialists who, with the aid of certain reactionaries in the Republican camp, succeeded in preventing full liberation by defeating the revolutionary forces in the 'Madiun Affair'. Because of this, the August Revolution was not completed; Indonesia remains a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society, and the task of the Communists, Aidit concluded, is to liberate it.¹⁴

¹⁴ *ISIR*, pp. 6-49. The trade union founded in 1905 — the *Staatspoorbond*, which united salaried employees of the state railways, almost all of them Europeans — was neither socialist nor nationalist; it is presumably given prominence here to show the precocity of the labour movement, which most people would identify with the Left. Budi Utomo and Serikat Islam were prominent early organizations in the national movement. The mutiny on the cruiser *Zeven Provinciën* in 1933 has usually been identified with the Communists though there is no evidence they had a direct role in it. The Youth Vow (*Sumpah Pemuda*) of 1928 is seen as a high point of non-Communist nationalism, affirming the unity of nation and language.

The setting of *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* is entirely national: in the beginning was Indonesia, and in the end the task of the party is to liberate it. The only really visible outsiders are Indonesia's enemies. The international aspects of the revolutionary movement are notably missing: there is virtually no reference to Marx¹⁵ and none to foreign movements until it is asserted, two-thirds of the way through the work, that the birth of the Indonesian independence movement was partially inspired by the 'Russian Revolution of 1905 which was led by the Russian Communists with Lenin as their foremost leader'.¹⁶ A passing reference to the Bolshevik revolution, and the international revolutionary context of the historical account is done. No attempt is made to harness the power contained in the image of Marxism's international ideological modernity or of world revolution. Even granted the ambivalence which international connections arouse in an age of nationalism, the elimination of any outside revolutionary context is extraordinary.

It is the founding of the Indonesian nation that was the fundamental historical fact for Aidit; history is the working-out of that promise, the nation-state's realization of itself. The problem of property comes second in importance as well as time: although Indonesia must rid itself of its remaining feudal characteristics, this is in the first instance because that is a prerequisite for true national liberation.¹⁷ The end of the struggle is 'complete national independence,

¹⁵ The only reference is occasioned by the fact that Marx wrote a pungent sentence in *Capital* on the wickedness of Dutch colonial rule; see *ISIR*, p. 28.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 44. Presumably the emphasis on the 1905 Revolution was by way of moving the international Communist role back to a time when it could be portrayed as having inspired the rise of the independence movement in general and not just the PKI. It is not followed up, however; this is about the only time when outside events are portrayed as inspiring the Indonesian movement. The reference to the Bolshevik Revolution in the historical account is almost diffident: 'The Great October Russian Revolution of 1917 had a great influence on the Indonesian proletariat and especially on the ISDV' (p. 45). Towards the end of the work Aidit asserts that 'Since the Indonesian revolution at the present stage is marked by world socialist construction and the disintegration of world capitalism, there can be no doubt that the future of the Indonesian revolution is not capitalism but socialism and communism' (pp. 67-8). This occurs, however, as an encouraging wind-up to the work and is not an integral part of the discussion, which otherwise does not get beyond the completion of the national revolution. There is no mention of the Chinese Revolution or any other Asian revolutionary movement.

¹⁷ This is particularly developed in the concluding section on political action, since it involved a major problem for party policy. Aidit argued that 'it is clear that the most important tasks are to fight against two enemies. That is, to carry out the national revolution to overthrow the forces of imperialism, the enemy from without, and to carry out the democratic revolution to overthrow the forces of the feudal landlord at home'. (*ISIR*, p. 53.) He then went on to argue that, 'The idea of finishing the national revolution first and then only after the national revolution has been completed of carrying out the anti-feudal democratic revolution is a dangerous and incorrect idea. This is because the idea of "completing the national revolution" without struggling for the emancipation of the peasants from the exploitation of the survivals of feudalism means not drawing the peasants over to the side of the revolution. . . . Without arousing the peasants and drawing them into the revolution, the national revolution cannot possibly be completed in its entirety'. (p. 54.) The implications of this dictum were much debated in the next years; what is of interest to us here is to note that the completion of the national revolution is the legitimate goal: social action is valid not for itself but because it contributes to the national revolution.

the implementation of democratic changes and improvements in the living conditions of the people'.¹⁸ Only for the nation, therefore, was completion envisioned. Hegel is avenged, and Marx is stood on his head.

We can appreciate the implications of this if we look more closely at Aidit's construction of Indonesian history in the twentieth century. It begins, as we have noted, with the emergence of two new social forces, the proletariat and the national bourgeoisie. Let me retell the story in very un-Marxist metaphor, not in order to make it seem less serious but to bring out its structure as a myth:

The two brothers Proletarian and Nationalist were destined to liberate the realm from its foreign oppressors. They began first by gathering the strength which lay in the people by forging the weapon Organization. First Proletarian created the first trade union, then Nationalist the Budi Utomo, and so on until Proletarian had created the PKI. But because of his youth and inexperience, and because the strength of the people was not yet well focused, and because the enemy had not yet realized that his doom was upon him, the great organizational weapon was wielded improperly, and Proletarian was crushed. Then Nationalist took the lead, inspired by the struggle his brother had led, and created the Youth Vow which revived and focused the people's strength. Proletarian's returning powers were displayed, 'like a thunderbolt out of the blue sky' in the *Zeven Provinciën* mutiny, which 'gave tens of millions of oppressed Indonesian people hope and confidence in themselves'.¹⁹ Then came the Japanese — and at this point the myth breaks down.

What destroys it is the failure of the assumption of equality and closeness of relationship between Proletarian and Nationalist. Because this grows problematical, *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* switches back to the tale of the struggle of the people (*rakyat*). Japan's rule is even crueller than that of the Dutch, and the people rebel against it often — in Singapore, Indramayu, Blitar, the Karo lands, among peasants, intellectuals, and youth. It is the 'people' which proclaims independence and sets up the Republic.

Sukarno is obviously an immediate source of the problem. Although the PKI became increasingly dependent on and sycophantic to that leader in the post-revolutionary period, Aidit initially expressed himself most unfavourably on him as a collaborator with the Japanese and betrayer of the people at Madiun. *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* shows a middle stage: Sukarno is referred to neither for good nor for ill in the historical account; he does not appear at all.²⁰ There is no co-operation with the Japanese, for

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁰ His name is only mentioned in the concluding policy section, when it is stated that, 'The urgent political demand to unite the people as much as possible at the present stage is the demand for 100% implementation of President Sukarno's Concept, as an important step towards achieving the strategic objective of the Indonesian revolution, that is, the completion of the August Revolution in its entirety'. (*ISIR*, pp. 54-5.) The Concept (*Konsepsi*) was one of the early moves on the way to Guided Democracy.

whatever motive, only an undifferentiated struggle of the people for liberation. Above all, it must be the 'people' which proclaims independence: this sacred role cannot be left to leaders whose relationship to the proletariat is in doubt, not so much, one suspects, because it might lessen the August Revolution but because it might reflect on the legitimacy of the PKI.

The problems grow more difficult as the course of the revolution is recounted: only two paragraphs are devoted to the war of independence in Aidit's historical account, an extraordinary compression if we consider the importance accorded to the August Revolution by the PKI of that period. Indeed, we can see this even in the brief compass given here, for the 'people' of the Japanese period is replaced by the revolution as both actor and goal. More striking still, only one aspect of the revolution is really touched on, and this is the Madiun Affair. Let me quote Aidit's account of the revolution in full:

This young Republic of Indonesia had to face up to strong enemies whose reputation was at that time on the upswing because they had just returned victors from the battlefields of the second world war, namely the British and Dutch armies who were assisted by American imperialism. Besides being armed with far superior military weapons than those being used by the armed forces of the Republic of Indonesia, the imperialists were also able to make use of the weapons of politics and diplomacy. They set up puppet states to encircle the Indonesian revolution and strove to split the forces of the revolution from within by utilising reactionary persons who had important positions in the Republic.

By means of intrigues and intimidations, the imperialists with the help of the Hatta clique succeeded in January 1948 in overthrowing the revolutionary government of the Republic and setting up in its place a reactionary government headed by Hatta who was at that time Vice-President of the Republic of Indonesia. It was the Hatta Government which later pursued a policy of hunting down and murdering the Communists and other progressives. After crushing the revolutionary forces during the bloody event known as the "Madiun Affair", the way was open for the Hatta Government to reach a compromise with the Dutch government under the supervision of a representative of the USA. On November 2nd, 1949, the Hatta Government and the Dutch government signed the Round Table Conference (RTC) agreement which was in essence nothing but an agreement which placed Indonesia in the position of a semi-colonial country.²¹

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

Sukarno remaining nonexistent, there is only Hatta, in 1957 a current enemy as well as a good symbol of all that was wrong with bourgeois nationalism from the Communist point of view. He and his henchmen overthrow 'the revolutionary government of the Republic', but no further details of this regime are provided. For one thing, as the tale stands it implies that this government was the only legitimate source of national leadership, thus further avoiding the problem of Sukarno and hinting at a leading role by the PKI; and for another, the attitude of Aidit and his colleagues towards the revolution's Left Wing leaders was highly ambivalent, and it no doubt seemed better to gloss over their policies. The important thing was to provide an explanation of Madiun, which was crucial not, I suspect, because Aidit and his colleagues completely believed in the interpretation presented here but because they half felt that their opponents' version had something to it and that somehow – under great provocation but nonetheless wrongly – the PKI had indeed turned on the Republic's legitimate leadership. The version presented in *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* is interesting because it presents a positive counter-myth, but as a piece of serious political analysis it leaves much to be desired. It provides no evident way in which cadres could deal with the question which at that time was most likely to be asked – whose side was Sukarno on and why? – and it did not really try to analyse why the PKI was defeated, although this was clearly important for the subject of study and was commanded by Marxist-Leninist traditions of self-criticism.

The reason for this peculiar treatment, which was general for PKI views of the revolution in the 1951-65 period,²² was that for the Communist leadership the 1945 revolution was truly legitimate, and no further class, belief, or movement could claim precedence. Thus in Aidit's essay the August Revolution ultimately replaces the long-term revolutionary movement as a central term of reference – *Revolusi Agustus* driving out *revolusi* – so that the task of the party is not to complete the centuries-old struggle of the *rakyat* but the fight begun in 1945:

²² In the more detailed PKI histories published in the Aidit period, the party showed itself especially interested in emphasizing the historical depth of its participation in the anti-colonial struggle, asserting the prominence of the PKI in the 1920s effort against the Dutch. Studies of the war of independence, on the other hand, were remarkably sparse, especially when we consider the relative abundance of non-Communist accounts. The most notable exception was Sidik Kertapati's *Sekitar Proklamasi 17 Agustus 1945*, which was begun as an independent project but was accepted by and expanded under the auspices of the party press (Jakarta, 1957). As its title indicates it was concerned not with the course but the outbreak of the revolution, and it was orientated towards a view from below: towards the *pemuda* (youth) and other groups which opposed the Japanese. Sukarno, Hatta, and other high-status, cooperating leaders are not denied, but they enter the scene late and are seen from a great distance; they are instruments but not originators of the declaration of independence. The essential role of the people as opponents of the Japanese and proclaimers of independence is thus sustained. The one aspect of the revolution that was explored in detail under party auspices was the Madiun Affair, and the main interpreter was Aidit; see note 24 below.

The national revolutionary struggle of the Indonesian people which had gone on for almost fifty years since 1908, which had gone on for more than thirty years since the revolt in 1926, which had gone on for almost thirty years since the "Youth Vow" of 1928 and which had gone on for more than eleven years since the August 1945 Revolution has not yet fully completed its tasks, that is the establishment of complete national independence, the implementation of democratic changes and improvements in the living conditions of the people. The August Revolution has not yet been completed in its entirety. This is why it is the responsibility of the entire Indonesian people, and especially of the Indonesian proletariat and the PKI, to take into its hands the entire responsibility of completing the August Revolution in its entirety.²³

The myth that Aidit began with in *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution* was one which might have been used by a radical nationalist regime; or it could have served a Communist movement whose domination of the struggle for national liberation was so thorough that the celebration of the nation-state was the celebration of itself. But in fact the PKI did not lead the war of independence or rule thereafter. Therefore the terms of Aidit's history had to change from the struggle of the people to a pairing of proletariat and national bourgeoisie, of Communist and Nationalist movements. Yet this in turn could not lead in its logical direction of class differentiation and social conflict, because the Aidit leadership could not admit the PKI's lack of centrality to the cardinal experience of the war against the Dutch, nor did it wish to declare the closing down of revolutionary possibilities short of class warfare. Therefore, as we have seen, the image was changed again, and real discussion of the revolution was avoided.

What is legitimated at the end is not the PKI but the nation-state and a revolutionary experience that the party did not control. Aidit and his colleagues must have been unaware of this blurring, for though policy may have dictated some inconsistencies they are hardly likely to have forged deliberately a historical model the internal myth of which did not hold, and which led not towards but away from the PKI. To suggest why they nonetheless unconsciously did so, let us turn again to the question of the audience for which the study was intended.

²³ *ISIR*, p. 29. Note Aidit here forgets the history he has been at pains to construct: the struggle begins with the Budi Utomo in 1908 rather than the first trade union, and the *Zeven Provinciën* mutiny, earlier portrayed as surpassing the Youth Vow in meaning, is ignored while the latter is noted.

We have seen that the text was declared to be for the instruction of party cadres; and yet we seem to discern another audience, those at whose persuasion so much Indonesian Communist activity to 1965 was aimed. For though the PKI built what was, certainly by Indonesian standards, a massive and highly organized movement, the fact that the party did not have state power and chose peaceful means to pursue it meant that it had to persuade a significant portion of those who did have power to yield them place. The strategy seemed practicable partly because there were no palatable alternatives in the post-revolutionary period and partly because it seemed to Aidit and his colleagues only reasonable that true patriots should come to see things as they saw them. To their minds the Leninist analysis of imperialism, which the nationalists had long embraced, showed that only through the complete rejection of capitalism and the West could a colony truly free itself; and the aftermath of the revolution made the pernicious effects of compromise all too clear. Pro-Western figures, Hatta and his ilk, were in eclipse, while those who had wavered at the time of Madiun seemed to be moving towards a surer anti-imperialist commitment.

There were of course people whose interests lay against socialism and a break with the West; but in Indonesia they seemed relatively few. Capitalism was the province of outsiders; those whose cultural and technical expertise assumed a Western connection were discredited or alienated from their mentors. And could one, in any case, speak of a post-revolutionary establishment so soon – when so many of those now in power were only recently guerillas and had scarcely accommodated themselves to the forms and claims of a ruling class? Parentage, instinct, and happenstance had made Communists of Aidit and his colleagues, but they well knew how thin a border of class or attitude separated them from others who came of political age in 1945. They shared their treasuring of the revolution and of the nation which they, young folk of no special account, had begun themselves. Surely such people could not be seen as members of a hardened ruling class, or as stereotypical 'bourgeois nationalists'; they were too unformed in social origin, in ideas, and in their economic state. Madiun must thus be seen as a tragic misunderstanding rather than a revelation of the true gulf between those who would change society and those who would rule it. The danger lay not in a failure to draw class lines clearly but in splitting the common struggle for liberation. Hence Aidit and his associates held that 'we must guard our national unity as the apple of our eye',²⁴ stressing that the August Revolution was not yet fulfilled and urging those co-revolutionists

²⁴ D.N. Aidit, 'We Accuse "Madiun Affair"', *Problems of the Indonesian Revolution*, p. 135. The original is D.N. Aidit, *Menggugat Peristiwa Madiun*; it was first published by Pembaruan in 1955 and repeatedly reprinted. For examples of Aidit's interpretation of the Madiun Affair, see this and his *Konfrontasi Peristiwa Madiun 1948 – Peristiwa Sumatera 1956* (Jakarta, 1957). *The Buku Putih tentang Peristiwa Madiun* [White Book on the Madiun Affair] (Department Agitprop CC PKI, 1953), provided the basic materials for the PKI interpretation of the affair in the 1951-65 period.

outside the party to recognize the only way to accomplish it, showing them that Communism was not the international demon its enemies claimed but the crown and destiny of the Indonesian nation-state. The party and its cadres must always have this in mind, and must shape, as in *Indonesian Society and the Indonesian Revolution*, their every formulation to this grand invitation. And so, when in 1965 national unity was broken and the Communists stood alone, they had nothing to legitimize their separateness.

In the end, the PKI leaders of the Aidit generation were children of their time, commanded by history as well as creating it. They saw themselves as part of a grand movement for the realization of Indonesian independence and greatness. They asserted their party's role in the development of that movement along with the non-Communist nationalists, and indeed their right to be considered heirs to its leadership, but in concentrating on their legitimacy as nationalists they tended increasingly to accept a frame of reference which was not their own and to stress the similarities rather than the rivalry between their aims and those of 'bourgeois nationalism'. At the same time, they did not give up their goals; having risen rapidly in a time when social and economic boundaries were in flux, seeing the possibilities of their situation more clearly than its limitations, they were imbued with a historical optimism which their spreading popularity and later Sukarno's favour only served to strengthen. Though they devoted great energy in thought and action to reconciling their nationalist and Marxist ancestry, they never really succeeded, and where the two clashed it was the nationalist side whose legitimacy was accepted, with all the implications of this. Hence 'August Revolution' subsumed 'People', which had replaced 'Proletariat'. It is not surprising that when, following the 1965 coup, the shattered PKI leadership set itself to re-assessing the role of Aidit and his colleagues, it addressed itself first of all to the task of re-interpreting the meaning of the August Revolution.²⁵

²⁵ The Politburo Statement of August 1966, issued just before the full-blown *Otokritik* of the party, devoted the first half of its lengthy analysis entirely to a consideration of the true nature of the August Revolution; the second half, criticizing previous policy, drew on the discussion of the August Revolution as its main theoretical source. The analysis poses a number of interesting problems; it is worth noting here that it argues that the revolution succeeded so far as evicting the imperialists was concerned and that the party should have emphasized the 'anti-fascist' aspects of the struggle thereafter. It notably fails to come to grips with the question of attitude towards non-Communist revolutionary leaders, taking the same way out as Aidit's account: Sukarno is not mentioned, only the perennial villains Sjahrir and Hatta. Other critics of the period charged that the August Revolution had failed, power having fallen into the hands of a class which was ultimately more willing to become client to the imperialists than to yield power to the people, and that the PKI leadership should have responded to this in formulating its post-revolutionary strategy. Both views seemed entirely absorbed in the Indonesian experience; only the publications of PKI exiles, dependent on the favour of their foreign hosts and more aware of international surroundings, gave much attention to the international aspects of the PKI's past in reconsidering its policies. However, as the only available party statements originating from Indonesia date from the years immediately after the coup, since which time there has been much disruption of the remaining PKI cadre through arrest and death, these interpretations cannot be considered indicative of the attitudes of any present leadership.

But does the story stop there? For if Aidit and his colleagues were enchanted by the experience of the national revolution, theirs was the problem of a political generation. Far more serious are the ideological bonds of the nationalists, for nothing has replaced the Marxism they absorbed so early in their perception of the world. As the basic vocabulary in which the national past is portrayed, it shapes the way in which the present is seen and the future confronted. Those in power since Sukarno have not been able to establish a framework of their own. Ultimately, the irony of the anti-colonial movement may be less the captivation of the Communists by the national ideal than the subversion of the post-revolutionary ruling elite by the philosophy it adopted to legitimate its struggle against the Dutch.

FOLK HISTORY

It is the role of the literate elite to pass on an 'official' view of the past from one generation to the next. Until this century this elite was a small one in Southeast Asia, for the most part limited to court scribes and religious scholars. The non-literate majority of the population, however, by no means ignored the past or failed to transmit a sense of its meaning across the generations. Their collective memories were kept vivid by oral means — story-telling, songs and recitations, and folk theatre in its many forms. Scholars have increasingly recognized these two types of tradition as distinct if not autonomous.

Some of the ways in which the written/'official' and the oral/popular traditions influenced each other have been discussed above, particularly in the opening section. The advent of mass literacy and the transistor radio to Southeast Asia in the last few decades has of course increased the interpenetration of the two patterns of communication and perception. Folk tales have been published and folk theatre broadcast, while governments and revolutionary movements alike have sought to reach the masses in a popular idiom. Yet it would be a mistake to see the two thought-worlds converging, for the rural population continues to draw different conclusions even from the same stories heard in the cities and the schools.

The final two essays demonstrate the on-going popular uses of stories shared by the elite. The first discusses a historical tale of Makassarese villagers of Sulawesi. Although the outlines of this tale are similar to stories found in the Makassarese and Bugis court records as well as Dutch reports, the substance has been altered substantially to reaffirm certain fundamental village values. The second essay describes the manner in which a romantic story of a culture hero of faraway Spain was transformed into a virtual Tagalog folk epic in the Philippines, and became a basis for peasant revolution.

A VILLAGE PERCEPTION OF ARUNG PALAKKA AND THE MAKASSAR WAR OF 1666-69*

Leonard Y. Andaya

In studies by Western and Western-trained historians, Arung Palakka is described principally in terms of the economic rivalry in northeastern Indonesia between the Makassar kingdom of Goa and the Dutch East India Company (VOC) which culminated in the Makassar War of 1666-69. To the Bugis-Makassar people, however, the story of Arung Palakka and the war is of deeper significance because it represents basic themes and beliefs which govern their way of life to the present day. Among the Bugis-Makassar royal and noble families, the war and Arung Palakka's role in it are regarded as one more chapter in an old, familiar and on-going struggle for political power and leadership in South Sulawesi. For the vast majority of ordinary villagers, this subject has assumed an even loftier dimension and has become an affirmation of the superiority of their perception of the world. The divergence of interpretation between the court and the village reflects a crucial difference in world-views which is apparent in an examination of their respective chronicle and folktale traditions.

In the court tradition of chronicle-writing (*attoriolong* [Bugis]/*patturioloang* [Makassar]), it is the list of rulers and their deeds which is of primary concern.¹ The world of the chronicles only exists because of the presence of a ruler. The opening sentences of these chronicles depict the state of the earth before rulers as one of lawlessness, wars and disorder. Into this situation descends a being from the Upper World (*ToManurung* [Bugis]/*TuManurung* [Makassar]), who transforms this primeval chaos into a new creation and infuses it with meaning by his presence. The real world only begins with this being, who becomes the first ruler. From this point onward, all movement revolves around and is activated by the ruler, the focal point of what the chronicler has circumscribed as the true world. Whatever does not impinge upon the ruler has no place in the chronicles because it is not of this world and hence is without meaning and focus. It is this imperious logic within the court tradition of chronicle writing that determines which events are to be discussed and how they are to be evaluated.

* I wish to dedicate this paper to Abd. Rahim Daeng Mone, La Side Daeng Tapala, and the late Andi Pangerang Opu Tosinilele who spent so many hours patiently sharing with me their knowledge of the history and culture of their people.

¹ For examples of Bugis *attoriolong* see B.F. Matthes, *Boegineesche Chrestomathie* (Makassar, 1864). Makassar *patturioloang* can be found in B.F. Matthes, *Makassaarsche Chrestomathie* ('s-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1883), and in G.J. Wolhoff and Abdurrahim (eds), *Sedjarah Goa*, (Ujung Pandang, 1967).

In the village folktale tradition it is not the ruler who is the motivating force of the world, but the customs and practices (*ade'* [Bugis] /*ada'* [Makassar]) which have been transmitted by the ancestors and sanctioned by time. This village tradition merely reflects the fundamental belief among the villagers in the innate superiority of the *ade'*/*ada'* and the original *gaukeng* (Bugis)/*gaukang* (Makassar) communities, which predated the institution of kingship and were responsible for its creation.² The values of the society based upon this age-old *ade'*/*ada'* form the villagers' world, in which the common man, noble, ruler, and gods interact. In the eyes of the villagers, the actors change, but the *ade'*/*ada'* remains immutable and in the end emerges victorious and vindicated. *Ade'*/*ada'* thus becomes the principal determining factor in the storyteller's and the villagers' interpretation of events in the past.

Scholars who have studied the court chronicles have expressed great admiration for the historical sense of the Bugis/Makassar people.³ Yet the transmitters of these traditions were not striving for historical accuracy as such but for a recording of the past which conformed to and was comprehensible within the world-view of the courts. In this regard both the court chronicles and the village tales are fundamentally similar; they describe events in the past within a frame of reference familiar and acceptable to their intended audience. A case in point is the story of Arung Palakka and the Makassar War of 1666-69. Most published works which had access to native sources dealing with this subject have relied almost exclusively on documents originating from the Bugis-Makassar courts.⁴ As a result they have focused on the political conflict between the rival kingdoms and recorded the exultation of the victorious Bugis leaders and the sheer depression and pessimism of the vanquished Makassar ruling classes. The very same story undergoes a transformation when told by the villagers in the

² A *gaukeng*/*gaukang* was an object considered to have special magical properties which acted as a social integrator and a unifying element within a community. See H.Th. Chabot, *Verwantschap, Stand en Sexe in Zuid-Celebes* (Groningen, J.B. Wolters, 1950) p. 239. For a discussion of the relationship of these communities and the institution of kingship, see L.Y. Andaya, 'The Nature of Kingship in Bone' in *Pre-Colonial State Systems in Southeast Asia* (Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Monograph no. 6) (Kuala Lumpur, 1975) pp. 115-25.

³ R.A. Kern, 'Proeve van Boegineesche geschiedschrijving', *BKI*, 104 (1948), p. 30; A.A. Cense, *Eenige aantekeningen over Makassaars-Boeginese geschiedschrijving*, *BKI*, 107 (1951), pp. 51-7; J. Noorduyt, 'Origins of South Celebes Historical Writing' in Sudjatmoko (ed.), *An Introduction to Indonesian Historiography* (Ithaca, Cornell U.P. 1965), pp. 138-43; Mattulada, *Latua, Satu lukisan analisis terhadap atropologi-politik orang Bugis* (Ujung Pandang, 1975) pp. 16-20.

⁴ An exception is a three volume work in Bugis by La Side Dg. Tapala entitled, *Lontara'na Petta Malampae Gemme'na (Sulawesi riatang 1611-1696)* (Ujung Pandang, 1971). La Side's account of Arung Palakka's early life is drawn principally from village oral sources.

popular 'Tale of the Three Ships' (*Sinrili'na Kappala' Tallumbatua*).⁵ This paper is an attempt to show how the villagers, through their version of a well-known historical event, express a view of the world uniquely their own, and one by which all events in the past are judged.

To appreciate the significance of certain aspects of the *Sinrili'na Kappala' Tallumbatua*, some knowledge of the area and events surrounding the Makassar War is necessary. There are four principal ethnic groups (*suku*) in South Sulawesi: Bugis (3,200,000), Makassar (1,500,000), Toraja (550,000) and Mandar (400,000).⁶ Despite the apparent differences in life-styles due to the influence of Islam (Bugis, Makassar, Mandar) and Christianity (Toraja), these four *suku* are linguistically and culturally related.⁷ The Bugis and Makassar occupy the choicest lands in the peninsula, leaving the smaller groups of the Mandar hugging the sea coasts in the northwest and the Toraja scattered throughout the central highland regions. During the growth of these separate *suku* communities, the Bugis-Makassar peoples had a decided advantage in their extensive arable lands, which were capable of supporting large populations. The ever-increasing pool of manpower formed the underlying strength of the burgeoning Bugis-Makassar kingdoms and assured their dominance in the affairs of South Sulawesi.

According to the earliest traditions, the Bugis kingdom of Luwu' in the fifteenth century was the first to exercise any widespread authority in the area. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it was replaced as a leading power by the twin Makassar kingdoms of Goa-Tallo'⁸ and the Bugis kingdom of Bone; but by 1611 Goa emerged supreme and unchallenged. The VOC posed the only serious threat to Goa, as relations became increasingly strained over their economic rivalry in the spice trade of northeastern Indonesia. Various unfortunate incidents contributed further to the growing animosity between the two groups. In 1660 the Dutch bombarded Makassar in retaliation for the murder of a shipwrecked Dutch crew and the confiscation of the ship's goods.

⁵ A *sinrili'* is a type of poem like the Malay *syair*, but it need not necessarily be in rhyme. The 'Three Ships' of the title refers to the Dutch ships which came and attacked the kingdom of Goa. Although historically there were twenty-one Dutch ships which made up the fleet, this tale mentions only three.

⁶ Christian Pelras, 'Celebes-Sud: Fiche Signalétique', *Archipel* (Paris), 10 (1975) p. 6.

⁷ R.F. Mills, 'The Reconstruction of Proto-South Sulawesi', *Archipel* (Paris) 10 (1975) pp. 217-18.

⁸ In the 16th century the smaller neighbouring kingdom of Tallo' entered into an agreement with the larger more powerful kingdom of Goa. From that period onward it was considered to be a twin kingdom in which the ruler of Tallo' would always serve as Chief Minister (*Pabbicara butta*) of the kingdom of Goa. Abdurrazak Dg. Patunru, *Sedjarah Goa* (Ujung Pandang, 1967), p. 9. Henceforth I will use 'Goa' to refer to both kingdoms.

Although there was an eventual settlement of the dispute, relations between Goa and the Dutch steadily deteriorated. Finally the VOC launched a large military expedition under Admiral Cornelis Speelman, which succeeded in defeating Goa in the Makassar War of 1666-69.

Included in this expedition was a small contingent of Bugis refugees under Arung Palakka,⁹ whose father was a minor lord in Soppeng and whose mother was the daughter of the first Muslim ruler of Bone. He and his followers had fled Sulawesi and gone to the island of Butun in 1660, after an abortive Bugis revolt against their Goa overlords. They remained on Butun for three years, but the constant threat of a Makassar punitive expedition made their continuing presence on the island unsafe. They finally decided to appeal to the Dutch for assistance, and in 1663 a ship was sent to Butun to bring the refugees to Batavia. There they were given land on the banks of the Angke River, where they built a settlement and eked out a precarious existence for three years. While in exile they never foreswore their determination to return to their homeland and free their people with the support of the VOC. Their inactivity in Batavia, therefore, understandably bred discontent and frustration which frequently found release in escapades which branded them as incorrigible troublemakers. The Dutch finally resorted to using them as mercenaries against the Minangkabau in Pariaman in August 1666, partly in order to keep them out of mischief.

The highly admirable performance of the Bugis troops and their leader Arung Palakka at Pariaman at last convinced the Dutch of the value of having the Bugis as allies in any future conflict with Goa. When a VOC punitive expedition set sail from Batavia in December 1666 to attack Goa, prominent among the native troops were Arung Palakka and the Bugis. A vital part of the Dutch strategy was to use the presence of Arung Palakka to rally the Bugis people against their Goa oppressors. As expected, the Bugis joined Arung Palakka by the thousands and played a decisive role in defeating Goa and forcing it to sign the Treaty of Bungaya on 18 November 1667. The leaders of Goa, however, never really accepted the treaty. In April 1668 the unfinished war resumed with a ferocity which the Dutch had not experienced anywhere else in the archipelago. But sheer courage was no match for the superior firepower of the Dutch, and in July 1669 Goa was forced to sign the Treaty of Bungaya for the second time, bringing the war to an end.¹⁰

⁹ In Bugis manuscripts he is usually referred to by his personal name (La Tenritatta), his apanage title (Arung Palakka), his epithets (To Unru' or Petta Malampee Gemme'na), or his posthumous name (Petta Matinroe ri Bontuala'). Since he is more widely known in Western writings as Arung Palakka, I will henceforth refer to him in this paper by this title.

¹⁰ For a brief history of Dutch involvement with the kingdom of Goa in the 17th century and a detailed account of the Makassar War, see F.W. Stapel, *Het Bongaais Verdrag* (Groningen, J.B. Wolters, 1922). See also the introduction of C. Skinner (ed and tr.), *Sja'ir Perang Mengkasar* ('s-Gravenhage, 1963), for a brief account in English of the background and the war.

Arung Palakka became the principal architect in the reorganization of the power structure in South Sulawesi after the defeat of Goa. Although he had no kingdom as a power base until he was proclaimed ruler of Bone in 1673, he exercised great influence from his residence in Bontoala', only a few kilometres away from the Dutch main headquarters in Fort Rotterdam. Building upon his favoured position with Admiral Speelman and, after Speelman's death, with the Dutch Governor-Generals in Batavia, Arung Palakka was able to defy even the Dutch governors in Fort Rotterdam in order to achieve his aim of making all of South Sulawesi, including the Mandar and Toraja areas, responsive to his wishes. He dominated the affairs of the region for some thirty years and left his mark not only on the political and social institutions of the areas but also on the folk memories of every group in South Sulawesi.

The Mandar and Toraja elders can still regale an interested visitor with tales of their heroic resistance and 'victories' over the Bugis and Arung Palakka. Among the Toraja a practice which survived until the twentieth century, of seizing human sacrifices from a particular village, dates from the period of Arung Palakka's wars, when this village betrayed the Toraja alliance.¹¹ Various areas in the Bugis areas of Bone and Soppeng which claim to have historical connections with Arung Palakka have become sacred (*keramat*) spots. In Soppeng there is a bamboo tree which is regarded with great respect by the villagers. They say it was once the staff of a banner carried by Arung Palakka's followers that took root after being stuck in the ground. In Bone the people of a small village of Cempalagia proudly point out a fresh water source on the seashore which spouted forth from Arung Palakka's footstep when he boarded the boat taking him to safety in Butun. But the most *keramat* area of all is the graves of Arung Palakka and his wife who lie side by side on a hill in Bontolala', near the city of Ujung Pandang (formerly Makassar). People come from all areas of South Sulawesi to ask favours and make special vows at these graves because they continue to believe in Arung Palakka's special powers.

What is especially puzzling and noteworthy is the participation of the Makassar people in the respect and devotion paid to their supposed arch-enemy, the Bugis leader Arung Palakka. Large numbers of Makassar villagers make a pilgrimage to Arung Palakka's grave every year.¹² In late 1974 and early 1975 one of the most popular radio programmes among Makassar audiences was the *Sinrili'na Kappala' Tallumbatua* (henceforth SKT), a Makassar village tale about Arung Palakka and the Makassar War recited by a storyteller with the aid of a stringed instrument called the *keso-keso*.¹³ Since Arung Palakka played an

¹¹ Interview with Pendeta Y. Linting, Pendeta Geraja Toraja, Ujung Pandang, 13 April 1975; and with Sarungallo', Pareng Kesu, Bekas Kepala Distrik Kesu, Rantepao, 3 May 1975.

¹² Interview with Hamzah Daeng Tompo on 11 April 1975 and with Abd. Rahim Daeng Mone on 12 April 1975.

¹³ See bibliographical appendix. The popularity of the radio performance of this tale, especially among the Makassar villagers, seems to be a reaffirmation of the values being espoused in the tale.

important role in the defeat of Goa, one would not have expected him to be a focus of a Makassar story of the war, nor to be described as sympathetically as he is in the SKT. An examination of the structure and contents of this tale reveals a perception of the world and the past which explains why this is possible.

Structurally, there are four parts to the SKT: the introduction, the search, the flight and the war. In the introduction the Tunisombaya (He who is given obeisance, i.e. ruler) of Goa summons his vassal lords (*Karaeng Bate-Bate*) and the Council of Nine (*Bate Salapang*) and addresses them saying: 'There is no ruler who is above me: only I am given obeisance. Truly there is no ruler who is my equal. But I would like you to be my protection because I am not yet strong'.¹⁴ A large wall is ordered to be built measuring three *depa* in thickness and five *depa* in height.¹⁵ After its completion the Tunisombaya calls soothsayers to determine whether there would be anyone who would be able to breach the walls and destroy Goa. When one of the soothsayers replies that there is, the Tunisombaya orders that he be found and killed.

The search then begins. The soothsayer is asked to identify the enemy, and he answers that the enemy is in the womb and that his mother suffers from morning sickness. The Tunisombaya then orders all pregnant women in that condition to be killed. Several months later the Tunisombaya again asks the soothsayer whether there is an enemy who will break down his walls and destroy Goa. Again the reply is yes, with the clue that this time the enemy is six months old. All women who are six months pregnant are put to death. And thus the story goes through the various stages of pregnancy, babyhood, childhood, and finally early youth, with more people being put to death at each stage, but never the enemy who is being sought.¹⁶ Finally, the soothsayer advises the Tunisombaya to hold a *raga* match as a way of spotting the enemy.¹⁷ Since the soothsayer had earlier said that the challenger to the Tunisombaya's power would come from among his own people, only the heads of the kingdom of Goa are invited to participate. Through a spectacular display of skill in the *raga* game, the sought-after enemy is at long last revealed: the Tunisombaya's own son, Andi Patunru'.

¹⁴ SKT, p. 2.

¹⁵ A *depa* is approximately the length from fingertip to fingertip with one's arms outstretched, or about six feet.

¹⁶ Although the SKT does not explain why he was not found, the Bugis folk traditions are much more explicit. Some maintain that whenever the mother of the child being sought was examined, the foetus went down to its mother's calf and thereby escaped detection. Others say that because the child's mother belonged to the Goa court, she was exempt from the examination. (These folk traditions were collected in Bone and Soppeng in September and October, 1974.)

¹⁷ In a *raga* game, a rotan ball (*raga*) is tossed in the air and kept there by the participants by using any part of the body but the hands. Skill is measured by how well and how long an individual can keep the ball in the air.

The flight is then the subject of the third part of the story. Andi Patunru', accompanied by his brother, flees Goa to escape death. He goes in search of someone who is great enough to bring him back to Goa to remove his shame and restore his self-respect. He visits the rulers of Bungoro, Sidenreng, Bantaeng, Butun, Bima, Sumbawa, Bali, Buleleng and Solo but is gently rebuffed by them all with the explanation that they are not equal to the might of Goa. Only after meeting with the Dutch Governor-General in Batavia does Andi Patunru' gain an ally who is both willing and capable of undertaking an expedition against Goa on his behalf. As a condition for this help, Andi Patunru' is first asked to assist in fighting the Minangkabau at Pariaman on the west coast of Sumatra. He agrees, and in the campaign the ruler of Pariaman submits to Andi Patunru' and the Dutch without a shot being fired. Having fulfilled his part of the bargain, Andi Patunru' is now promised Dutch assistance against Goa.

The final section deals with the war between Andi Patunru', aided by the Dutch, against the Tunisombaya of Goa. Although the Dutch are vastly superior in weapons, they are effectively counterbalanced by the Makassar warriors who are steeped in the arts of invulnerability. The war drags on for many years, with the fighting interspersed with periods of peace when Andi Patunru' and the Dutch return to Batavia for reinforcements and ships. Weakened by lack of food the Makassar people are finally forced to sign the Treaty of Bungaya which ends the war. Andi Patunru' is restored as the *Pati Mataranna* (Crown Prince) of Goa and also gains the Bugis title of Arung Palakka from his mother who is related to the royal house of Bone. The story ends with the Tunisombaya and the Governor-General of Batavia affirming their friendship and brotherhood.

The SKT appears to have a straightforward plot based on a particular historical event, the Makassar War of 1666-69. But on closer examination of the contents, one finds certain key elements emphasized. The first of these is the concept of *siri* in Bugis-Makassar society. In the term *siri* are contained two seemingly contradictory meanings. It can mean 'shame', but also 'self-esteem' or 'self-respect'. One frequently hears of a person being made *siri* or 'ashamed' because of having been slighted, intentionally or unintentionally. It is much rarer to be told of an individual attempting to regain or restore his *siri* or 'self-respect'. Yet both aspects of the word are essential in understanding the totality of the concept.¹⁸ A *siri* situation arises when an individual feels that his status or social prestige in the society, or his sense of his own worth and importance has been besmirched by another in public. It may also arise where someone believes that he has been mistakenly, and thus unjustly, accused of

¹⁸ Chabot, pp. 140, 211-26; Mattulada, pp. 65-69; Mattulada, *Bugis-Makassar* (Jakarta, Jurusan Antropologi, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Indonesia, 1974), pp. 37-8; A. Suhandi, *Masyarakat Makassar-Bugis* (Bandung, Jurusan Antropologi, Fakultas Sastra, Universitas Indonesia, 1973), pp. 6-7, 27-28.

something which he did not do. In this society the sense of justice is immediate and intense. While a Bugis or Makassar would take the strongest abuse meekly if he himself believed that he was culpable, he would react strongly and violently against such treatment if he believed himself to be in the right, and hence felt personally and socially degraded.¹⁹

Once a person has been made *siri*' (ashamed), he is then expected by the society to take steps toward redeeming himself by removing the unjust cause of this shame and thus restore his *siri*' (self-respect) in his own and his society's eyes. The society expects a person who had been made *siri*' to take action against the offender, for it is felt that it is better to die in defence of one's self-respect (*mate ri siri'na*) than to live without it (*mate siri*'). To die in defence of one's *siri*' is 'to die a death of sugar and coconut milk' (*mate rigollai, mate risantanngge*) or in other words, to die a sweet death.²⁰ According to the rulers of old, one of the misdeeds which will lead to war is to cause *siri*' (shame) to someone of good birth.²¹ Someone who is *mate siri*' and does nothing about it is regarded with the greatest contempt and is considered to be of no use to the society. In such cases exile is often preferable to a humiliating forced isolation within the community.

The two aspects of *siri*' (shame, self-respect) must always be kept in balance one with the other. By maintaining this equilibrium a person remains whole, a full individual. If shame should dominate and overwhelm the 'whole person', then self-respect must bring the being back into equilibrium. If self-respect should turn to arrogance, then shame or humility should be re-asserted to restore the balance. Without the balance of these two aspects of *siri*', one is considered to be lacking or 'unwhole'.

The second important element in the SKT is the concept of *pacce* (Makassar)/*pesse* (Bugis). In everyday usage it means 'to smart' and 'poignant', but it expresses a more subtle and intimate emotion than the literal meaning would suggest, as can be seen from the following Makassar and Bugis sayings:

(Makassar): *Ikambe Mangkasaraka, punna tasiri', paceseng nipab-bulo sibatannang.*

Trans: If it is not *siri*' which makes us, the Makassar people, one, then it is *pacce*.

(Bugis): *Ia sempugikku rekkua de'na siri'na engka messa pessena.*

Trans: If there is no longer *siri*' among us Bugis, at least there is certain to be *pesse*.

¹⁹ The most frequently discussed examples of *siri*' are those which involve *silariang*, those who elope because of the opposition to the match by the woman's family. The family is then said to have cause for being *siri*' (ashamed) and can only remove this shame by killing both *silariang*. A less violent solution may only come about when the couple has a child. The happiness of the grandparents may erase the bitterness towards the *silariang* and thus bring about a reconciliation.

²⁰ I am indebted to Dr Shelly Errington for this quotation.

²¹ Matthes, *Makassarsche Chrestomathie*, pp. 252-3.

A Bugis anthropologist merely notes the existence of the idea of *pacce/pesse* with the words that the above sayings 'leave one with the impression that *pacce/pesse* is a kind of stimulus to raise a strong feeling of solidarity in Bugis/Makassar circles'.²² To understand why there arises such a sense of solidarity, one needs to explore further and see how this term is used in the literature itself.

In one Bugis text the Lord of Mario witnesses the arrival in the city of Makassar of large numbers of exhausted, hungry and sick Bugis men. They are of all ages, from young boys to old men, who were forced-marched by the enemy for several days from their homeland through high mountains and difficult terrain. Within this Bugis prince wells up great *pesse* watching the suffering of his people (*Natemmakana pessena babuana Datu Mario mitai anrasanrasanna sempanuana*).²³ Another passage in this text describes the unequalled intensity of the *pesse* of Prince ToBala upon seeing the indescribable suffering of his people (*ToBala de'nasa anukua pessena perru'na mitai pabanuana, natuju anrasarasang tempeddinna naita bati*).²⁴ In both of these cases, *pesse* arises in an individual upon witnessing the suffering of his compatriots. *Pacce/pesse*, then, is the state of being able to commiserate with one's compatriots and to share the burden of their sorrow. A Makassar or Bugis who is unable to have *pacce/pesse* is considered to have lost the essential link which binds him spiritually with his own community. He no longer shares the sufferings and burdens of his group and in effect rejects all ties with it.²⁵

Pacce/pesse and *siri'* are twin concepts which define the Bugis-Makassar individual. Maintaining an equilibrium between shame and self-respect as understood in *siri'* and nurturing a sense of sharing, commiserating in the sorrows and the sufferings of any member of one's community as expressed in the notion of *pacce/pesse*, are expected of a Bugis or Makassar. Even in a situation where an individual has been made *siri'* (ashamed) and has not yet been able to restore the equilibrium by regaining *siri'* (self-respect), there is still *pacce/pesse*, which identifies him as part of his community even in exile and disgrace. He exhibits *pacce/pesse* by commiserating with and sharing in the sorrow and pain of his immediate and greater family (community) by his action or lack of it, while his family and community reciprocate with their *pacce/pesse* towards his own trials and suffering. The ties between them are thus reinforced and the solidarity of the group is maintained.

²² Mattulada, *Bugis-Makassar*, p. 38.

²³ La Side, I, p. 63.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 69-70.

²⁵ This concept of *pacce/pesse* is not something unique to Makassar/Bugis society. It appears that Tagalog society in the Philippines has a similar belief which is known as *damay*. R. Iletto, *Pasion and the Interpretation of Change in Tagalog Society* (Ph.D. thesis, Cornell, 1974), p. 58.

The third and final principal element found in the SKT is the belief in *sare* (Makassar)/*were* (Bugis). *Sare/were* means 'to give', but it also has come to mean 'one's fate, one's destiny'. There are two words in the SKT which can be translated as fate: *sare* and *taka'dere*. The difference between the two terms is the difference between the Arabic (and now Indonesian) words *nasib* and *taqdir*. *Nasib* means chance, fate, lot; whereas, *taqdir* means predetermination (of God).²⁶ While *taqdir* involves the hand of God in the predetermination of one's fate and hence an immutable plan of destiny, *nasib* implies a much more human element in determining one's fate. There is no mention of God in the definition of *nasib*. The Makassar *taka'dere* is simply a rendering of the Arabic (Indonesian) *taqdir* and conveys the idea of an ordering of the universe according to a plan of God. *Sare/were*, on the other hand, is a local word which appears to be much closer in meaning to *nasib*. There is a connotation in *sare/were* that one can improve or worsen one's lot in life, one's fate, through one's own actions.

Taka'dere is only mentioned once in the text. Andi Patunru' explains to the ruler of Bone that he is not afraid of the dangers which may be in store for him, for 'what is my *sare* and my *taka'dere* I will accept'.²⁷ However, it is not with *taka'dere*, fate predestined by God, that the storyteller is concerned, but with *sare*, a person's lot in life which is determined by man himself. Despite an apparent similarity in the way in which Andi Patunru' viewed *sare* and *taka'dere* in the above statement, the occasions where *sare* is used in the rest of the work clearly indicate that one achieves one's *sare* through one's own actions in life. The result of one's efforts is one's *sare* which one accepts. Implied in this concept is an ongoing process through life in which one's *sare* keeps changing at different points in time in accordance with one's individual efforts. Even if *taka'dere* were to be revealed, one is expected to determine one's *sare* within the divine immutable plan. The ability to respond vigorously to the challenges of life as implied in this concept is a quality respected and admired in Bugis-Makassar society. In the SKT this belief is affirmed by the Makassar nobles in their statement to the ruler on whether Goa should war with the Dutch and Andi Patunru' or surrender: 'As a shrimp is red [when cooked] and unbleached cotton is white, so must we accept what occurs, *but we must first of all make an effort*'.²⁸

The storyteller thus describes Arung Palakka and the Makassar War in terms of *siri*, *pacce*, and *sare*, and of proper roles in society. The intricate web of impersonal political and economic causes and effects is reduced to personalities and human foibles because they are more suitable vehicles for the achieving

²⁶ M.Z. Madina, *Arabic-English Dictionary* (New York, 1973) pp. 522-3, 669.

²⁷ SKT, p. 22.

²⁸ SKT, p. 106. My italics.

of the storyteller's aims and more comprehensible to his audience. The personifying of the events makes it possible for the village audience to identify with the principal protagonists in the drama and to remember with greater ease the lessons being drawn from the tale.²⁹

One of the main characters in the SKT is Andi Patunru'. *Andi* is a Bugis-Makassar honorific used in addressing a young prince or princess. *Patunru'* is the Makassar-Bugis word meaning 'to conquer'. It would have been more than mere coincidence that one of the epithets of the Bugis leader who fought with the Dutch against the Makassar kingdoms was *ToUnru'*, a shortened form of *ToAppatunru'*, which means 'The Conqueror'. This was the name by which this Bugis leader was known to the Makassar people during the 1666-69 war in Makassar. In the *Sya'ir Perang Mengkasar* which was written by a Malay scribe from the Makassar-Malay community in Goa sometime between July 1669 and June 1670, the Bugis leader is referred to both by his title *Arung Palakka*, and by the epithet *Si Tunderu*,³⁰ which is the Malay rendering of *ToUnru'*. It is clear that the storyteller of the SKT intended the Andi Patunru' of his story to represent the historical Arung Palakka, *ToUnru'*.

The equating of Andi Patunru', son of a Makassar ruler and crown prince of Goa in the SKT, with a famous historical Bugis leader did not require mental somersaults on the part of the Makassar villager. He would have been acquainted with oral traditions of Arung Palakka's childhood and early years of his youth and manhood in the court circles of Goa.³¹ According to these traditions, Arung Palakka was eleven years old when he accompanied his hostage parents to Goa.³² He was treated like a son in the household of the Chief Minister of Goa, Karaeng Pattinngaloang, and brought up in a manner befitting a ruler's son. At the time of his flight into exile at the age of twenty-five, Arung Palakka had spent the greater part of his life in the kingdom of Goa.³³ There are also references in Dutch sources which appear to support these traditions of Arung Palakka's

²⁹ An enlightening parallel can be found in semi-literate pre-classical Greece, where minstrels of the Homeric epics expressed complex causes and effects through the actions of Gods and heroic beings with whom the listeners could identify and thereby recall their deeds. E.A. Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Oxford, B. Blackwell, 1963) p. 169.

³⁰ Skinner, *passim*.

³¹ Bugis oral traditions from the villages are not as punctilious as the Bugis court chronicles in attributing pure Bugis origins to Arung Palakka. Instead, they share some similarity with the Makassar village traditions by suggesting that Arung Palakka was the son of the ruler of Goa by a Bugis princess. These Bugis oral traditions may reflect some awareness of Arung Palakka's early connections with the court of Goa.

³² La Side, I, pp. 37, 43-4.

³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 46-54. The VOC records from the 17th century and the Bugis-Makassar court chronicles contain very little information about Arung Palakka's early life; whereas, both the Bugis and Makassar village oral traditions mention that he spent his youth in the kingdom of Goa. The similarity of these two oral traditions and the absence of any contradictory evidence from other sources have led me to adopt the view well-known in the Bugis-Makassar villagers.

close ties with the Makassar kingdom of Goa. In July 1666 the ruler of Butun urged the Dutch to use Arung Palakka in an attack on Goa because 'he was greatly esteemed in the land of the Makassar people'.³⁴ During the lulls in the fighting in Makassar in 1666-67, the Dutch would often remark at the unexpected friendly encounters which Arung Palakka seemed to have with the Goa enemies.³⁵ It is also noteworthy that in the course of the war Karaeng Karunrung, son of Arung Palakka's former host in Goa, grew increasingly friendly with Arung Palakka.³⁶

To this day the memory of Arung Palakka is held sacred among many people of Goa. Although the grave of Sultan Hasanuddin, the ruler of Goa during the war, is located in the vicinity of that of Arung Palakka, it is rarely visited by the Makassar people. The graves of Arung Palakka and his wife Daeng Talele (a Makassar princess), on the other hand, have become sacred sites for both the Bugis and the Makassar. Flowers can usually be seen strewn over the graves, and as quickly as the grave awning and wooden gravemarkers are ripped and torn apart bit by bit by people who believe in their magical-sacral powers of healing, they are replaced by those fulfilling vows made at the graves.³⁷ Therefore, when the storyteller consciously made the historical figure Arung Palakka 'ToUnru' into the Andi Patunru' of the SKT, he would not have been radically at variance with Makassar traditions linking Arung Palakka with the court of Goa.

The other major character in the story is the *Tunisombaya* Goa. *Tunisombaya* is not a personal name but is merely a title meaning 'he who is given obeisance' (hence ruler) in Goa. No personal, reign, or posthumous name is given, because this is the only way in which a villager dares refer to a ruler. If even a Makassar court chronicler would take the precaution of prefacing any mention of the personal names of rulers past and present with a type of invocation to ward off any punishment from the forces surrounding kingship,³⁸ how much greater would have been the fear of the ordinary man in even contemplating to refer to the ruler in anything but the respectful *Tunisombaya*. Who the particular historical ruler of Goa was in the SKT is not as important to the Makassar villager as the fact that he was the *Tunisombaya* Goa.

³⁴ Koloniaal Archief 1148, Overgekomen Brieven 1667, Report of Commissaris Joan van Wesenhagen, 16 July 1666, fol. 529.

³⁵ Stapel, p. 181.

³⁶ Koloniaal Archief 1157, Overgekomen Brieven 1669, Speelman to Batavia, 1 December 1667, fol. 330.

³⁷ Interview with Hamzah Daeng Tompo on 11 April 1975 and Abd. Rahim Daeng Mone on 12 April 1975.

³⁸ It is believed that anyone who defies the ruler will be struck by the supernatural forces surrounding kingship causing a swelling of the stomach (*mabassung*) and the scattering of one's entire descent (*ma'weke-weke*). B.F. Matthes, *Makassarsch-Hollandsch Woordenboek* (Amsterdam, Nederlandsch Bijbelgenootschap, 1859) pp. 226-7, 538. For an example of how these words are used in the chronicles, see Wolhoff and Abdurrahim, p. 9.

In Bugis-Makassar society any misfortune or disaster to the land is directly attributed to the ruler's own personal behaviour. In times of natural or man-made calamity, the ruler is expected to appease God by specific acts of atonement for his deeds which have brought the wrath of God upon his kingdom.³⁹ There is also the converse side of this belief that if the people do not pay proper respect to the ruler, disaster will befall the land. In the SKT Andi Patunru' warns the messenger of the ruler of Bima: 'The rice will not grow if I were to be asked to pay anchor duty; the land would experience hardship and the inhabitants and all they own will suffer from epidemics and be struck by earthquakes. There will be no catch from the sea if I am asked for anchor duty, for I am of the seed of Goa . . . the true son of Tunisombaya Goa'.⁴⁰ The personal acts of the Tunisombaya, therefore, are understood to be responsible for any prosperity or calamity which visits the land. In the SKT the storyteller shows how the Tunisombaya erred in arrogance, thereby unleashing the forces which bring disaster to his land.

In the opening of the work the arrogance of the Tunisombaya is established. He declares that there is no ruler above him nor any lord who is his equal in Goa, and later orders a large wall to be built. After proudly surveying his wall and contemplating his greatness, he asks whether there would be any to topple the wall and defeat his land. His soothsayer reveals that this great kingdom of Goa would indeed be destroyed, and that it would be accomplished at the hands of the ruler's own son, Andi Patunru'. The Tunisombaya refuses to accept this *taka'dere*' and instead orders his son to be killed though the latter has committed no crime against the society (*sappa butta*) nor broken any prohibitions. The attempt to kill Andi Patunru' fails, and a *siri*' situation arises between the Tunisombaya and his son, which seeks resolution. The Tunisombaya's outright disregard of *taka'dere*' is considered to be the supreme act of *hubris*, of arrogance toward God. This arrogance is seen as having gone beyond the simple human emotion into the more serious plane of being sacrilegious and thereby inviting supernatural retribution.

There is a set pattern established during Andi Patunru's visits to various rulers during his flight. Andi Patunru' is welcomed and treated royally, befitting the true son of the Tunisombaya. While being entertained Andi Patunru' sheds tears thinking of his mothers (his own mother and others who cared for him) and the brothers and sisters he had left behind. Later when everyone has been fed, the ruler asks Andi Patunru' what the purpose of his visit is, to which he replies: 'I have done no wrong, committed no crimes against the society, nor gone against any prohibitions, and yet I have been exiled. Lift my veil of shame and restore my *siri*' by helping me return and defeat the land of Goa'.⁴¹ Andi Patunru' himself goes on to explain that if he

³⁹ Mattulada, *Latoa*, pp. 122-3, 148-9; B.F. Matthes, *Makassaarsche Chrestomathie*, pp. 249, 258.

⁴⁰ SKT, p. 48.

⁴¹ SKT, pp. 19, 22, 25, 34, 53, 58, 64, 71, 86.

had committed any wrong, any crime, then he would be able to bear the pain of exile.⁴² Each ruler demurs at his appeal, explaining that he lacks the manpower, the weapons, and the supplies for any such campaign against a power as great as Goa. Instead he suggests that Andi Patunru' remain in his land, marry one of the royal women, and then perhaps Andi Patunru's children or grandchildren would return and 'lift the veil of shame'. When Andi Patunru' realizes that no help would be forthcoming from a particular ruler, he then sails away in search of another. While on deck of the ship he sings two different songs with the same intent:

The White Cock of Manngasa,
The fowl which has been slaughtered
Will later return home to crow in its roost.

And:

The Calabai of Katangka [a type of fighting cock]
Cock which has just been slaughtered,
Will later come home to peck within its walls.⁴³

By singing these songs Andi Patunru' acknowledges his position in the eyes of his society as one dead, *mate siri'*, since he had not yet restored his *siri'*. However, like the fighting cock of Manngasa and Katangka, he promises to regain his 'life' through the restoration of his self-respect and therefore be able to live once again among his own people.

While sympathetic to Andi Patunru's plight, these rulers are also cognizant of their weaknesses and suggest an alternative course of action: to wait until Andi Patunru's children or grandchildren are able to lift his veil of shame. While direct personal reaction to a challenge provoked through the causing of *siri'* is what is usually expected and admired, one can take the less direct and less praiseworthy but acceptable solution of leaving it to one's children or grandchildren to accomplish the restoration of *siri'*.⁴⁴ Andi Patunru', however, refuses to take the less honourable way and continues to seek improvement in his *sare* through his own efforts:

⁴² SKT, p. 107. Exile, then, would have been a just punishment since a Bugis or Makassar would as humbly accept what he deserves as he would violently reject an unjust condemnation.

⁴³ SKT, pp. 40, 43.

⁴⁴ In the same way in present-day Makassar society, a child from a poor family who succeeds in graduating from university and achieving an important position within the community is considered to have removed the veil of his parents (*nasungkeang bongonna tau toana*). Personal communication from Abd. Rahim Daeng Mone, 20 October 1975.

There is no country which I have not set foot upon, nor thick forest through which I have not crawled. There have been animals who have bared their teeth wanting to devour me, but it is not my *sare* to be eaten by wild beasts, as it is to have this pain in my heart.⁴⁵

The pain in Andi Patunru's heart drives him to seek a way of removing the pain and improving his *sare*.

The difference between Andi Patunru's actions and those of the Tunisombaya lies in the difference between *taka'dere* and *sare*. The storyteller who is viewing the war after the event considers the defeat of Goa as *taka'dere* and hence the Tunisombaya's attempt to thwart *taka'dere* to be futile and against the predestination of God.⁴⁶ In the other case, the *siri* (shame) and exile of Andi Patunru are seen as his *sare* which he properly and admirably attempts to change.

In Andi Patunru's meetings with the various rulers, he always thinks of his four mothers and his brothers and sisters. Tears come to his eyes, but they are not tears of self-pity because he is separated from them. They are tears of sympathy and commiseration (*pacce*) with them in their suffering thinking of his plight. When Andi Patunru finally succeeds in returning to Goa with the Dutch, the Tunisombaya asks him to leave so that Goa would escape destruction. Andi Patunru answers:

I will return happily [to the west] if you give me my own mother to bring to the west. Whenever I see a pregnant woman having difficulty going up and down the stairs, I think that this is the way it was with my mother. Whenever I see a woman in labour suffering each time she uses every ounce of effort to give birth to the child, I think this is how it was with my mother when she gave birth to me. Secondly, give me my milk mother (*anrong tumappasusu*), for I have drunk much of her milk. Thirdly, give me my nursemaid (*anrong tumattarinti*) who had so much difficulty carrying me up and down the stairs. Fourthly, give me my mother (*anrong katuo*) who cared for me during the absence of my real mother.⁴⁷

In this request Andi Patunru reveals the deepest and most intimate form of *pacce*: that between a mother and a child. So strong is the *pacce* between Andi Patunru and his mothers that he would have considered ignoring his *siri* (shame) and returning happily to the west if they were to accompany him.

⁴⁵ SKT, p. 107.

⁴⁶ The Makassar-Malay author of the *Sya'ir Perang Mengkasar* also regarded the defeat of Goa as being *takdir*, predestined by God. See Skinner, p. 105.

⁴⁷ SKT, pp. 107-8.

In his decision is exemplified the Makassar saying that: 'If it is not *siri*' which makes us, the Makassar people one, then it is *pacce*'. Andi Patunru's request that he be given his mothers is but the strongest expression of his *pacce* sentiments which are found throughout the SKT, identifying him with the Makassar community and demonstrating his oneness with it, despite being *mate siri*.⁴⁸

Underlying the whole SKT is the sense of the movement of destiny toward the impending discovery of the powerful ally who will help Andi Patunru' destroy Goa and restore his *siri*'. Finally, the Dutch agree to support him in his personal war against his father. Despite the realization of the Makassar people that Andi Patunru' has been unjustly treated and is now admirably pursuing what societal conventions demand, they remain loyal to their ruler. It is not for the Makassar people to judge him but to conduct themselves in their proper role as loyal subjects. To oppose their ruler openly would be not only an improper act but one which would bring reprisals from the forces of kingship. This is an affair between the Tunisombaya and God, and not the ordinary Makassar villager. The ruler's arrogance has brought Goa to this state, and only through atonement for his blasphemy will his land be restored to normality. In relinquishing to the Dutch the city of Ujung Pandang and the islands on which the Goa royal children used to bathe and picnic, the Tunisombaya expiates his arrogance in seeking to frustrate *taka'dere*'.

In stark contrast to the arrogance and defiant deeds of the Tunisombaya is the praiseworthy behaviour of the Makassar people in defence of Goa. During the long and fierce battles which ensue, the total participation of the Makassar community is described. Not only the courageous soldiers in the battlefield, but also those men who remain at home to till the fields and women who prepare the meals for the soldiers are praised by the storyteller. The descriptions of the supreme effort of all the Makassar people in support of their ruler in the war would have made any future generation proud, whatever the final outcome. The storyteller says of the soldiers:

They were splendid, these warriors of Goa! They were like fighting cocks who were at peak development and pampered night and day... All of the warriors were like *kerbau* [water buffaloes] who had been yoked together. The lances and spears were like the tall wild grass... The number of people who died is indescribable. Until *azar tinggi* [about 5.45 p.m.] the warriors fought. No one ate, and no one drank. The war was their rice, and the cannon-balls their savoury dishes.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ SKT, pp. 22, 29, 35, 71, 82, 86, 108.

⁴⁹ SKT, p. 128.

To feed these warriors, the women are exhorted by the ruler of Goa, to prepare for heavy work with the words:

Pound rice, cook and feed the soldiers. And you women, wear trousers and shirts, not sarongs.⁵⁰

The importance of the rice-grower in the war is also emphasized in the following decision taken by Goa:

If there are three men in one household one is to be sent to war and two are to plant rice. If there are two men in one household, one is to go to war and one is to plant rice. If there is but one man in the household, do not send him immediately to war. Only if it is absolutely necessary should he be sent.⁵¹

This is the picture which the SKT gives of the role of the Makassar people in defence of their ruler and land. While resigning themselves to the fact of Goa's destruction as being *taka'dere*, they nevertheless accept the challenge of determining their *sare* within this predestined event by their total support of the ruler and by their bravery in the battlefield. The defeat of Goa is attributed not to any lack of courage on the part of the Makassar people but to the deeds of the Tunisombaya. Even before the fighting begins the messenger of the Tunisombaya returns from the Dutch ships to report: 'the weaponry [of the Dutch] is very complete down below because he [Andi Patunru] has done no wrong, this exiled prince of Goa, the pursued of Lakiung'.⁵² As the storyteller views these events, the Dutch are there principally as an arm of Andi Patunru'. Their weaponry is expected to be complete because the cause of Andi Patunru' is just. The Makassar War of 1666-69 is therefore seen not as a humiliating defeat but as a victory of the Makassar people in salvaging the honour and esteem of their kingdom from a tragic situation arising from the arrogance of their ruler.

Arung Palakka, the historical Bugis conqueror of Goa, becomes for the Makassar people the sympathetic Andi Patunru' of the SKT, for whom they can express *pacce* for several reasons. First of all, his acts are governed by *siri*' or the desire to remove the shame caused by his father and to restore his self-respect. His determination not to remain in a state of *mate siri*', in which his whole life as a member of the Makassar community would have been that of one socially dead, is considered to be praiseworthy. Secondly, his *pacce* with his four mothers and his brothers and sisters in their suffering over his condition demonstrates his oneness with the Makassar community, despite his being

⁵⁰ SKT, p. 133.

⁵¹ SKT, p. 123.

⁵² SKT, p. 104.

mate siri'. And finally, his peregrinations to many lands in search of a way to improve his *sare* would have been greeted with approval by the Makassar listeners. Arung Palakka/Andi Patunru's activities which led to the conquest of Goa are understandable and even admirable to a Makassar villager because of the circumstances under which this occurred. It is not Arung Palakka/Andi Patunru' who is culpable, but the Tunisombaya Goa. By the latter's arrogance in wanting the future revealed and then attempting to prevent *taka'dere*' or destiny from taking its course, he sets in motion a series of events culminating, as is predicted, in the destruction of Goa. It is his acts as the Tunisombaya which have displeased God and hence brought retribution in the form of the defeat of Goa. The Tunisombaya now makes atonement for his sacrilege, and so peace is once again restored throughout his realm. In the end the world regains its equilibrium: the arrogance of the Tunisombaya is humbled, and Arung Palakka/Andi Patunru' removes his shame and regains his self-respect.

In examining the impact of Arung Palakka and the War of 1666-69 on Makassar society, both Western and Indonesian historians have relied almost exclusively upon Bugis-Makassar court literature and/or the VOC records. As a result their writings have tended to portray the bitterness and pessimism of the Makassar rulers and nobles as being a true reflection of the entire Makassar community. The SKT, however, demonstrates that the Makassar village perception of the past is quite unlike that of the court. Perhaps the example of the lau fruit in Makassar court and village traditions best captures the dichotomy of world views in Makassar society, and, at the same time, explains the basic optimism found among the villagers. A ripe lau fruit is twice the size of an unhusked coconut and is valuable not for its flesh but for its shell, which is used to carry water or palm wine. In the Makassar court chronicles, the heads of the villages approach the being descended from the UpperWorld (*TuManurung*) and ask him to be their ruler. They tell him: 'You are the hook and we the water vessel made from the lau fruit. If the hook should break, the lau vessel will also break. If the hook should break, but the lau vessel does not, we will die'.⁵³ In this passage the chronicler reaffirms the world-view of the court tradition by stressing the dependence of the people on the ruler. In the village tradition, however, the lau fruit assumes another role which sheds an entirely different light on the ruler-subject relationship. Once the flesh of the lau fruit is removed, the shell is so light that it will float on water. No matter how hard one may try to sink it, it will always bob up and continue to float. When a villager wishes to express someone's good fortune, he describes that particular individual's descent as being like a lau fruit which will always rise.⁵⁴

⁵³ Mattes, *Makassaarsche Chrestomathie*, p. 211.

⁵⁴ Personal communication from Abd. Rahim Daeng Mone, Ujung Pandang, 20 October 1975.

In like manner, the reference in the chronicles equating the people with the vessel made from the lau fruit may have been seen in court circles as an example of dependency but would have been regarded by the villagers as an accurate assessment of their ability to re-emerge after any adversity and survive.

The defeat of Goa in 1669 saw the crumbling of the world of the Makassar court and brought a sense of disillusionment and disgrace which is reflected in its chronicles. This tradition affords little encouragement or hope to the Makassar ruling classes. On the other hand, the village tradition as seen in the SKT perceives the role of Arung Palakka and the War of 1666-69 as a victory of the people and their values based on the age-old customs and practices (*ada'*) of the community. The traditional values expressed in the concepts of *siri'*, *pacce* and *sare* are reaffirmed, and the ruler is shown to be subject to them. By perceiving the past in these terms the Makassar villagers are not burdened with the guilt and pessimism of a defeated world as are their lords. Instead, they are buoyed by the confidence and optimism that their own world, based upon the *ada'*, has once again proved to be superior, and that they, like the vessel made from the lau fruit, would never be permanently submerged but would succeed in keeping afloat despite the rise and fall in the fortunes of their leaders.

TAGALOG POETRY AND IMAGE OF THE PAST DURING THE WAR AGAINST SPAIN

R.C. Ileto

One problem in the historiography of the Philippine revolutions of 1896 and 1898 is showing the relationship between the educated, articulate elite (*ilustrados*) who have left behind most of the documents, and the inarticulate 'masses' who fought and died in the various wars. Patron-client ties certainly help explain how the local *principalia*, or gentry class, was able to mobilize large numbers of people. Yet the events of the revolution indicate that the common folk were fighting under the 'blinding' influence not of individual personalities but of their conceptions of the meaning of the 'times', and powerful leaders were those who successfully articulated such conceptions. In his essay, Schumacher shows how the *ilustrados* created the basis for a Filipino history that would undermine and supplant a Spanish historiography 'which mandated Filipino loyalty to Spain under moral sanctions'. Such a history certainly provided 'a rational and moral legitimation for the new nation',¹ but it is not clear how it provided the impulse for the breaking of ties of *utang na lo'ob* (debt of gratitude)² to Spain that centuries of colonial rule had impressed upon the *indios*. For the people to have arrived at a state of mind in which such a break or separation was possible, if not inevitable, their conceptions of the past — after all *utang na lo'ob* is based on remembrance of the past — must have changed. How this could have occurred is the subject of this discussion.

Because of the constraints imposed by censorship and other forms of intellectual repression during Spanish rule, popular reading fare, up to the 1880s, took the form of religious tracts, and metrical romances called *awit*.³ Of the former, the various *Pasyon* poetic versions of the life, death and resurrection

¹ See John Schumacher's contribution to the present volume, p. 278.

² For the now classic definition of this term, see C. Kaut, '*Utang na loob*: a system of contractual obligations among Tagalog', *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology*, 17 (1961), pp. 256-72. I prefer to deal with *utang na lo'ob* less in terms of debt obligations which would be pure *utang*, than of meaningful interpersonal relationships, ties of lo'ob (self). See R. Ileto, 'Pasyon and the interpretation of change in Tagalog society' (Ph.D. thesis, Cornell, 1975) pp. 9-11, 287-8.

³ *Awit* literally means 'song', but has been defined by literary historians as 'dodecasyllabic narratives sung in an elegiac and pleading manner'. See B. Lumera, 'Tradition and influences in the development of Tagalog poetry' (Ph.D. thesis, Indiana University, 1967) p. 89.

of Jesus Christ became virtual social epics.⁴ I have discussed elsewhere the role of the *Pasyon* form in the revolution. Using a mode of textual analysis that will be attempted again in this essay, I showed how the people's familiarity with the narrative of Christ gave meaning to a life-and-death struggle for independence; a struggle imaged as a single redemptive event that unfolded itself with man's participation. But while it has become obvious that the language of folk Christianity flowed into the language of nationalism and revolution at the turn of the century, there is a danger of overstressing the impact of Christianity in all this. The story of Christ was meaningful in so far as it was appropriated by the society itself and mirrored its ideals. Other aspects of Spanish colonial influence can be examined in this light. In particular, we shall look into a Tagalog *awit*, *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*, based on legends of the Spanish hero Bernardo Carpio, that reveals a popular perception of the past upon which Filipino nationalists hinged their separatist aspirations.

The *Historia Famosa* has not been regarded as a literary milestone of the Tagalogs. Its authorship remains unknown,⁵ and it has been overshadowed by the more polished and 'urbane' *awit*, *Florante at Laura*. Like most *awit* in its time, the *Historia Famosa*'s narrative line is derived from legends surrounding the Spanish royalty and their Moorish adversaries.⁶ Dean Fansler comments that romantic stories of this type had been 'ridiculed to death by Cervantes' long before they appeared in Tagalog *awit* versions.⁷ Having filtered into the Philippines via Mexico, such stories drew no objections from friars as subject matter for indigenous literature. After all, loyalty to a European king and Christendom's triumph over the Moors were constant themes in these stories; they were useful in strengthening the *indios*' loyalty and *utang na lo'ob* to Spain and Catholicism. To a great extent, the *awit* was an effective colonial weapon. The indigenous literature that the Spanish priests destroyed soon after the conquest was replaced by *awit* and other related forms. Native priests, and laymen were quick to adjust to the limits within which they could compose Tagalog poetry; by the eighteenth century cheap editions of *awit* were 'printed in the cities and towns and then hawked, sold in sidewalk stalls, and brought to the most remote *barrios* by itinerant peddlers'.⁸ *Awit* stories were often dramatized, or at least sung in public. So powerful was the impact of *awit* on the popular imagination that the average *indio* in the nineteenth century can be

⁴ Particularly the *Casaysayan nang Pasiong Mahal ni Jesucristong Pangnnoon Natin*, see Iletto, pp. 12-15. The *Pasion* is a *corrido*, which are octosyllabic poems.

⁵ See bibliographical appendix.

⁶ On the foreign sources of *awit*, see D. Eugenio, 'Awit and Korido: a study of fifty Philippine metrical romances' (Ph.D. thesis, University of California at Los Angeles, 1965) pp. 38-40.

⁷ 'Metrical romances in the Philippines', *Journal of American Folk-lore*, 29 (1916) p. 203.

⁸ Eugenio, p. 8.

said to have dreamt of emulating chivalrous knights riding off to the Crusades or saving beautiful damsels from distress. He knew more about Emperor Charlemagne, the Seven Peers of France and the destruction of Troy than of pre-Spanish Philippine rajahs and the destruction of Manila by the conquistadores.

And yet, given the fact that the ordinary Filipino's consciousness of the past was mediated by *awit* poetry, the revolution happened. Contrary to the insistence of some *ilustrados* that the masses' utter ignorance, exemplified by their belief in fairy tales, was a stumbling block to the revolution,⁹ it was the 'ignorant' masses themselves who made independence the only reply to their past condition. In order to arrive at some understanding of this turn of events, let us examine first, some features of the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio* and second, the *awit*'s connection with nationalist writings on the eve of the revolution.

The author of the *Historia Famosa* states at the beginning that he has selected details from the Spanish history of Bernardo Carpio. The King and Queen of Spain have died leaving behind two little children named Alfonso and Jimena. Don Sancho, Count of Cerdania, rules over Spain until Alfonso comes of age and assumes the throne. The poet remarks that King Alfonso remains unmarried and has no fondness for women. Meanwhile Don Sancho has been appointed Royal Counsellor and Commanding General of the army. Another major character, Don Rubio, is introduced as Don Sancho's friend and Captain of the army.

After fourteen stanzas of the *awit*, a major transition takes place. The event is 'triggered' by the radiant beauty of the king's sister, Jimena. Her radiance, described in so many imagery-filled stanzas, causes confusion in the *lo'ob* (inner self) of notables, the king included, in Spain and abroad. Of graver import is the conflict that it causes between the comrades Don Sancho and Don Rubio. While both are attracted to Jimena's light, their responses are vastly different. Rubio, having been rebuked by Jimena, reacts with anger and shame (*hiya*).¹⁰ His *lo'ob*, initially displaced by Jimena's radiance, shows signs of 'hardening' into selfishness and treachery. On the other hand, Sancho's *lo'ob* is described by the poet as capable of love. In the light of Jimena's beauty, Sancho's confused *lo'ob* attains a fullness signified by his willingness to suffer and die for his beloved. Sancho's lengthy exposition of his love resembles a typical Tagalog *kundiman* (love song) which will be heard at several key points of the *awit*.

In a scene typical of most nineteenth century *awit*, a Moro¹¹ envoy appears with an insolent challenge to the Spanish king, who thereupon orders his

⁹ See I. Artacho, *Pamamahayag sa bayan Filipinas*, pamphlet, October 1899, in *Philippine Revolutionary Papers*, folder 428, Philippine National Library.

¹⁰ For an analysis of *hiya*, see J. Bulatao, 'Hiya', *Philippine Studies*, 12 (1964) pp. 424-38.

¹¹ Derived from 'Moors'. Perceptions of Christian-Muslim conflict were not alien-derived. *Awit* came to the Philippines during a time of fierce Muslim-led raids on Christian coastal towns in Luzon and the Visayas.

trusted General Sancho to lead his army against the villains. As the army assembles in the field Don Sancho, in defiance of the king's orders, sneaks into Jimena's room in the tower. His farewell speech again gives the poet an opportunity to drench the reader in the imagery of love and separation characteristic of folk poetry. Overpowered by such language Jimena becomes confused, then bursts into tears and surrenders herself to her lover.

Don Sancho's victory over the Moros is likened to the ravaging of a garden by a cyclone. But the General is not fated to profit by it. His rival Don Rubio, aware of the lovers' meeting, vents his ill-feeling upon Sancho by recommending to the King that the latter accept the Count of Barcelona's proposal to cement a political alliance by marrying Jimena. Hearing this draws an outburst of anger from Sancho. Rubio, whose *lo'ob* is filled with shame and 'conflicting elements', backs down in fear. But another opportunity for revenge presents itself when Rubio hears the birth scream of Jimena's child. Pretending to see 'justice' done, he rushes to the King, who is completely torn apart by the news of Sancho and Jimena's 'crime'. The King is thrown from his seat; suddenly he forgets his past relationship with Don Sancho and can think of nothing but schemes to destroy him.

As Sancho is about to take the infant Bernardo to Cerdania, the poet is given another opportunity to evoke in the reader the experience of anguish and loss, for the separation of the infant from his parents is perhaps the most significant event in the *awit*. As the poet himself remarks, after a description of Jimena's sadness:

What *lo'ob* however hard/ what heart would not be overcome by
this/ and be saddened and struck with pain/ for the two lovers with
a pure *lo'ob*?

(*Alin cayang loob na sacdal nang tigas/ alin namang puso ang hindi
mabagbag,/ na di malunusan at magdalang sindac/ sa dalauang
sintang ang loob ay tapat.*)

As Sancho leaves the tower with the child he is attacked by the King's soldiers. Fighting with one hand he can slaughter all of them, but the child's outcry is heard by the King who leaps from the sidelines, accusing Sancho of treachery. Sancho kneels and begs for mercy. All he asks is to be wed to Jimena before he is executed. The King hastily agrees to the marriage but treacherously sends Sancho to the Castle of Luna with a sealed letter outlining certain punishments to be meted out to the bearer. Sancho, to his surprise, is chained; his eyes are gouged out and he is thrown into a dark cell.

Has the King forgotten the past? laments Sancho. Is the pain of blindness his reward for the hardships he encountered in defending the kingdom? Again the poet gives free rein to images of pain and separation: Sancho from

Jimena, the parents from their child Bernardo. Sancho's lament ends with an appeal to God to have pity for his son:

And may he eventually recognize/ his true mother and true father/
and when, Lord, he comes of age/ may he, Lord God, recognize me.

*(At maquilala rin ang tunay na ina/ at aco,i, gayon din na caniyang
ama,/ na cun siya Poon nama,i, lumaqui na/ aco po, Dios co,
nama,i, maquilala.)*

Meanwhile Don Rubio becomes the closest confidante of the King. He is entrusted with bringing up the child Bernardo, whose true parents are ordered never to be revealed. Jimena, whose treachery brought great shame to her brother King Alfonso, is sent to a cloister. Alfonso scolds her for forgetting all the love and care he had given her and failing to show *utang na lo'ob* for things past. For her, as for Sancho, there is resignation to 'fate', to God's will.

As Bernardo grows up, it becomes obvious to all that he has extraordinary strength and energy. He is in constant movement, running to and fro, up and down stairs:

He walks and walks, but goes nowhere/ his *lo'ob* and heart always
disturbed . . .

*(Na lalacad-lacad ualang pinupunta/ ang loob at puso,i, parating
balisa, . . .)*

His energy is released in a wasteful and anti-social manner: hitting, maiming and killing horses, carabaos and other animals he meets on the road. Irate townsfolk complain to Don Rubio. Bernardo explains that he cannot control his own body and strength.

One day Bernardo asks his 'father' Rubio to persuade the King to knight him so that he may travel around the world battling idolatry and subduing wild beasts. But Rubio rebukes him; how can he be knighted if his own origins are unknown? Bernardo then realizes that Rubio is not his true father. He breaks into tears: 'this was the start of his disorientation/in behavior, thought and even his heart'. Fortunately, the King happens to come along. Showing pity he makes Bernardo a knight and adopted son, much to the dismay of Don Rubio. Later, having slain the arrogant Rubio in a fencing match, Bernardo is made General of the army. The son avenges the father.

As the adopted son of King Alfonso, Bernardo's energies become a bit more 'formed' and directed toward fighting the Moors. The most formidable enemy is the Emperor Carpio, whose vast territories cannot be penetrated even by the Twelve Peers of France. Carpio's envoy, Veromilla, arrives at the Spanish court demanding vassalage from the King under threat of invasion.

Bernardo, in his usual energetic, rather uncontrolled manner, reacts violently toward the envoy:

He struck the chair upon which the envoy sat/ causing him to fall
over/ everything was crushed, broken to pieces/ the King tried to
calm Bernardo:

My son, he said, just take it easy/ to fight an envoy as you did/ is
against all the laws/ so set your *lo'ob* straight.

(*At tuloy tinampal ang uupang silla/ ay agad natapon sampong
embajada,/ nagcadurog-durog nabaling lahat na/ nangusap ang hari
Bernardo,i, sucat na.// Anac co aniya icao ay maglibang/ at iya,
i, di utos sa leing alin man,/ na ang embajada ay malalabanan/ caya
ang loob mo ay magpacahusay.*)

As Veromilla returns to his camp, Bernardo tells the King that, with his fatherly blessing, he will fight the enemy single-handed. Indeed, he approaches the Moro lines alone and is ridiculed by Veromilla. But this youth who 'has just been weaned by his mother' completely devastates the enemy. Veromilla flees in great fear. Bernardo returns to the court and humbly dedicates his victory to the King. He owes it to God's mercy (*awa*) and to fate. He has only one request to make: that he be told the identities of his true parents. He is growing up yet has no roots, no relatives to pay respects to. The King then tries to deceive Bernardo by agreeing to his request provided that once and for all he defeat Emperor Carpio. Knowing Carpio's reputation, the King expects his youthful General to be slain in battle. But Bernardo's power has no equal in the world. Fighting like a 'lion, tiger and viper' he systematically conquers Carpio's nineteen castles until the Emperor gives up, hands over all his territory to Bernardo and agrees to pay tribute to Spain.

Upon his return to Spain Bernardo Carpio, as he is now called, is shocked to find a French prince, also named Bernardo, on the throne. King Alfonso, who had temporarily relinquished the throne while on a hunting trip, explains his decision in terms of 'traditional ties' between the Spanish and French ruling families. Bernardo scornfully rejects this argument. Moreover, he is disgusted by the King's refusal to reveal the identities of his parents. In an angry confrontation Bernardo declares that he will find his parents by force.

At this point Bernardo Carpio's energies seem to attain a peak of directedness. Having rejected another step-father, his first act is to destroy all the King's horses to prevent pursuit; this explicitly contrasts with his earlier meaningless destruction of neighbours' livestock and work animals. He stops by the wayside and prays to God and the Virgin Mother. A letter floats down from heaven with the truth about his parents, but before he can seek them out, he

is instructed to break Spain's ties of vassalage to France. He proceeds to the French court, where Emperor Ludovico explains to him that his relations with Spain are all based on very old agreements handed down from generation to generation. But Bernardo shows great contempt for traditional ties. Neither has he respect for Ludovico, whom he seizes by the collar and physically intimidates. The French court, in fear of Bernardo's power, capitulates. Bernardo then proceeds to the Castle of Luna.

The scene shifts to Sancho lamenting in prison: the King has no pity, has kept him for years in the darkness of a cell:

. . . And you my beloved son/ who, so I hear, are called Bernardo Carpio/ have passed through all towns and kingdoms/ and yet have not found your father, Sancho.

Why, beloved child/ have you not searched for your lord, your father?/ Haven't your heart and *lo'ob* been moved/ by my sufferings and laments?

(Icao naman caya na sintang anac co/ na nababalitang D. Bernardo Carpio,/ tanang villa,t, reino ay nasasapit mo/ di mo na narating ama mong si Sancho.// Ano бага bunso na guilio co,t, sinta/ di na siniyasat ang poon mo,t, ama,/ ang puso,t, loob mo,i, di na nabalisa/ sa nagdaralita,t, dito,i, nagdurusa.)

'As if he heard this lament', Bernardo arrives, kills the guards and frees his father. Unfortunately Sancho dies soon after the reunion. This, however, does not prevent Bernardo from legitimizing his tie to his parents. He brings his father, covered with a cloth on the pretext that he must not be exposed to cold air, to the King's palace where the wedding with Jimena takes place. Only after father, mother and son are formally reunited does Bernardo pretend to discover that his father is dead.

The *awit* does not end here, as it does in the Spanish originals. Bernardo, having declined the Spanish throne, continues his travels in search of idolaters to destroy. He arrives before a church-like structure with two lion statues by the entrance. Because the doors are shut, he kneels outside and prays. A bolt of lightning strikes and destroys one of the lions. Angered by the lightning's challenge, Bernardo hurls the other lion away and vows to search for the lightning and destroy it. Not far away, he sees two mountains hitting each other at regular intervals. Then a handsome youth—an angel—appears in dazzling brightness and tells Bernardo that the lightning has entered the mountain. God commands that Bernardo shall not see, much less capture, it. When the angel himself takes the path of the lightning, Bernardo stubbornly follows, the twin peaks closing in on him. The *awit* ends with the remark that since Bernardo was such a great and powerful hero, God cast a spell on him and thus kept him alive though hidden.

The *awit* just summarized is important for the study of the revolution in two respects. First, the appropriation by the Tagalogs of a Spanish hero enabled a people without a history to image their experience of a lost past as well as their hopes of liberation from the oppressiveness of Spanish rule. Second, the *awit* reveals a form of meaningfully structuring events which would later be used by nationalists to communicate their political ideas to the people.

The first point is borne out by evidence from local histories of central and southern Tagalog towns.¹² The *Historia Famosa's* account of Bernardo's last journey is derived from pre-Spanish beliefs in pilgrimages to the underworld to wrestle with spirits as a test of one's inner strength. The poet merely affirms that the world of Bernardo Carpio is the Philippines. By the second half of the nineteenth century, Tagalog peasants, at least those within the vicinity of the mountains that dominate the landscape of the Tagalog region, believed that Bernardo Carpio was their indigenous King trapped inside a mountain, struggling to free himself. Catastrophic events were interpreted as signs of his activity.

That their uneducated countrymen's conceptions of liberation were dominated by this myth did not escape the notice of some *ilustrados*. In Jose Rizal's novel *El Filibusterismo*, in which he entertains the possibility of armed revolt against Spain, there is this reflection upon a cart-driver's firm belief in Bernardo Carpio:

The peasants of that day kept alive a legend that their king, imprisoned in chains in the cave of San Mateo, would one day return to free them from oppression. Every hundred years he had broken one of his chains, and now he already had freed his arms and his left leg. Only his right leg was still held fast. It was he who caused earthquakes as he flailed about and struggled against his chains: he was so strong that one could shake hands with him only by stretching out a bone, which crumbled in his grasp. For no apparent reason the natives called him King Bernardo, confusing him perhaps with Bernardo del Carpio, the semi-mythical Spanish hero of the ninth century who was said to have defeated the French Roland at Roncesvalles.¹³

Then Rizal has the cart-driver mutter: 'When he gets his right foot free, I shall give him my horse, put myself under his orders, and die for him. He will free us from the Constabulary'.¹⁴ But unlike other patriots, as we shall see, Rizal

¹² The local evidence is found in the *Historical Data Papers* mss. series, Laguna, Rizal and Quezon provinces, Philippine National Library. Also in H.O. Beyer (comp.), *Tagalog Ethnography*, consisting of several bound and unbound volumes of mss. by Beyer's students; lodged at the Australian National Library.

¹³ L.M. Guerrero (trans.), *El Filibusterismo* [The Subversive] (New York, 1968) p. 35.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

was careful to separate the 'mythical' and what he considered the 'national' in his writings. He probably would not have appreciated the widespread rumour, at the outbreak of the revolution in 1896, that Rizal had gone to the depths of Mount Makiling, proven his intelligence and sincerity to Bernardo Carpio, and been told that it was time for the people to rise against Spain.¹⁵

The second point, which concerns the shape of the *Historia Famosa awit* and its connection with nationalist ideas of the past, is best dealt with by juxtaposing various aspects of *awit* and nationalist writings. In 1888, while Rizal was in London doing research for his annotations to Morga's history of the Philippines, a somewhat different historical piece — a sixty-six stanza poem titled *Hibik ng Filipinas sa Ynang Espania* (Filipinas' Lament to Mother Spain)¹⁶ — was being secretly distributed in the country. Its author, Hermenegildo Flores, was a teacher, poet and 'propagandist' who joined forces with well-known nationalist writer Marcelo del Pilar to bring the anti-friar issue to the Tagalog reading public. As we shall see, the key to the *Hibik*'s meaning lies in the frame established by the opening stanza:

Oh beautiful and generous Mother Spain/ where is your loving
concern for your child?/ It is I your youngest born, unfortunate
Filipinas/ Glance at me, you cannot ignore my suffering.

(*Ynang mapag-ampon Espaniang marilag,/ nasaan ang iyong pagtingin
sa anac?/ acong iyong bunsong abang Filipinas/ tingni, t sa dalita, i,
di na maca-iuas!*)

What follows is basically a history of the Philippines under the domination of the friars. Drawing from the research of propagandists in Europe, Flores enumerates the methods by which the friars' wealth was accumulated, the various types of taxes and 'voluntary' contributions forced on the people, and the disposition of debtors and other oppressed to flee to the hills. The friars promised swift entrance to heaven to all who acceded to their demands, but this was a form of *daya* (trickery), for the friars were the first to contradict their own teachings. In the middle of the poem there is a fairly detailed narrative of the friar-instigated murder of the liberal Governor-General Bustamante in 1719.

¹⁵ Beyer, I, Paper no. 27. According to C. Miranda, 'The masses were awaiting the liberation of Bernardo Carpio, a character in a tagalog legend, from the two enormous cliffs of Biak-na-Bato so that he might exterminate the Spanish soldiers who defended their outposts'. *Costumbres Populares* (Manila, 1911) p. 62. The episode involving the visit of a native (probably Rizal) to Bernardo Carpio's cave and his message to the people, is incorporated in recent editions of the *awit*; see Eugenio, pp. 136-37. This is absent in the 1919 edition I have used.

¹⁶ See bibliographical appendix.

Throughout the poem, interspersed among the details of the oppressive behaviour of the friars runs the parent-child motif introduced by the first stanza. This would later become a permanent feature of nationalist poetry directed to a mass audience. It has been argued that this 'frame' was a device invented by Flores and Del Pilar to enable them to give 'free play to [their] ironic pen[s]'.¹⁷ However I do not think that mere ingenuity gave rise to this form of nationalist writing. That Flores and Del Pilar wrote Tagalog poetry means that the facts they wanted to make known to the popular audience were carried by a familiar style of discourse. Flores and Del Pilar were tapping popular perceptions of a meaningful past.

In the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio* the past, as narrated by the *awit*'s characters, is always shaped by the idiom of personal relationship. Don Sancho's laments to Jimena, King Alfonso and his son Bernardo are vivid images of the past which appear periodically in the text, serving as markers to which the complicated elements of the story adhere. Sancho's expressions of love to Jimena are a constant reminder to his beloved as well as to the audience of the hardships which he has experienced in order to prove that his love is genuine, or 'in the *lo'ob*'. In Jimena, this lament has the effect of transforming an initial confusion into a commitment to her suitor in the face of retribution by the King. To the audience or reader, the laments serve as a reminder that Bernardo has not experienced a parent's love. The significance of this fact will be discussed later.

As Sancho lies on the verge of death in his prison cell, he enumerates his past services to the throne. The King has forgotten all this. As long as both Sancho and the King remembered the cumulative events that cemented their relationship, all went well; they acted honorably and correctly. But forgetfulness, usually occasioned by the influence of deceitful language from envious persons like Don Rubio, results in misguided, dishonorable acts. King Alfonso, it will be remembered, was knocked off his seat by Rubio's news of the illicit love affair. From this point on, he acts as a victim of amnesia; his plots against Sancho and, later, Bernardo are the 'effect' of his loss of memory, a condition that Sancho deplors in his laments. Conversely, in *awit* a hero's valiant deeds against the enemy are often the 'effect' of being conscious of the King's past favours to him, or of a loved one's pledge.

To a person reading or listening to the *awit*, Sancho's laments, set in measured verse form, would have evoked a response conditioned by his own experience of personal relationship. He would have experienced, not only Sancho and Jimena's suffering, but also the loss of parental love which haunts Bernardo and frames his activities. This audience response, the stimulation of which rather than the mere telling of events is the *awit*'s function, is called *damay* (empathy, participation). Flores and Del Pilar used the *hibik* (lament)

¹⁷ Lumbea, p. 246.

form in order to evoke from their audience a similar state of receptivity for the nationalist message.

The novelty of Flores' *Hibik* diminishes when the poem is seen in the context of its time. Scholars seem to have ignored Apolinario Mabini's observation that the first sign of a genuine nationalist stirring among the inhabitants of Manila and Cavite was a pervasive feeling of *damay* in a patriotic context. According to Mabini, the friar-instigated public execution in 1872 of three native priests under the false charge of plotting a mutiny in the Cavite arsenal had a deep impact on the masses. As rumours of the event spread through the provinces, ordinary Filipinos developed a hatred of the friars and 'deep pity and pain for the victims. This pain wrought up a miracle, . . . feeling pain, [Filipinos] felt themselves living; so they asked themselves how they lived'.¹⁸ These enigmatic statements simply mean that there was *damay* with the victims; not just a private feeling of pity, but a consciousness of some common fate. The first recorded patriotic song, *Sa Iyo ang Dahil* (Because of You),¹⁹ makes sense in this connection. Allegedly sung after 1872, it is simply a suitor's lament to his loved one, describing the pain in his heart caused by his love. It ends:

You should remember/ that my sufferings are caused by you/
always remember until death/ that you are my only love/ no one
but you and only you.

(*Sukat mong pakaalalahanin/ na ang hirap kong ito'y sa iyo ang
dahil;/ pakatantuin mo magpahanggang libing/ wala akong ibang
sinisinta/ kundi ikaw at ikaw rin.*)

The informant states that 'the song's meaning, to put it simply, is the desire for liberty; but since the lives of Fathers Burgos, Gomez and Zamora were in a quite precarious state, the people expressed their aspirations in this way'.²⁰ We can interpret this statement to mean that the love song, which is just a run-of-the-mill *kundiman*, was only a guise, a metaphor for the real thing - and that without Spanish repression a direct statement of the events would have been made. But the development of Tagalog 'patriotic' music shows that the *damay* evoked by *kundiman* is intrinsic to remembering the past.²¹ The

¹⁸ A. Mabini, *The Philippine Revolution* (translated by L.M. Guerrero) (Philippines, National Historical Commission, 1969) p. 23.

¹⁹ In C. Cauayani, 'Some popular songs of the Spanish period and their possible use in the music program of our schools', (M.A. thesis, University of the Philippines, 1954) p. 26.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

²¹ F.P. de Leon comments that many Filipino songs since the Spanish occupation 'have no conscious patriotic content, but some deeply rooted knowledge drawn instinctively from the people's collective experience seems to have injected in them a high-spirited nationalism'; 'Poetry, Music and Social Consciousness', *Philippine Studies*, 17 (1969) p. 273. This 'knowledge' is precisely what the interplay of music and lyrics brings to the singer or listener who is caught up in its flow.

event of 1872 was translated into imagery, thus becoming part of the singer's or listener's awareness of the past.

Flores surely knew the effectiveness of the lament form, thus he used it as a frame. But the *Hibik* is not pure imagery. Tagalog poetry also has a didactic function. The lament put Flores' audience in a state of being in which the political situation and the possibility of breaking ties with Spain could be apprehended. The last ten stanzas of the *Hibik* summarize the Philippine past in terms of a relationship whose authenticity is in doubt: Spain had sent the friars here, and because we had *utang na lo'ob* to Spain for her protective care, we had given the friars everything they wanted. The friars reciprocated with acts of cruelty, even executing those who had *damay* for Filipinas' tears. How is it possible, Filipinas asks, for a mother to oppress her own child? Has Spain, herself seduced by the friars [as King Alfonso had been by Don Rubio], forgotten the past?

In 1889, a year after the appearance of Flores' *Hibik*, Del Pilar's sequel *Sagot ng Espania sa Hibik nang Pilipinas* (Spain's reply to Filipinas' lament)²² was published in Barcelona and illegally circulated in the Philippines. Again, it is in the form of a lament: an old and helpless mother asks for her daughter's sympathy and offers advice. The frame is established in the first few stanzas:

(Lumbera translation): My heart was appalled when I heard/ your cry and dolorous plaint, my child;/ you have no sorrow, child, that's yours alone,/ for your mother always shares (*damay*) it with you.

You have no suffering, no affliction/ that I don't undergo with you:/ since you're the creation of my love,/ your humiliation is also mine.

When you were born, dear child, into this world,/ then when I had not yet become impoverished, as your mother I had no other wish// than to give you every comfort and pleasure.

(*Puso ko'y nahambal nang aking marinig/ bunso, ang taghoy mo't mapighating hibik;/ wala ka, anak kong, sariling hinagpis/ na hindi karamay ang ina mong ibig.// Wala kang dalita, walang kahirapan,/ na tinitii kang di ko dinaramdam:/ ang buhay mo'y bunga niring pagmamahal,/ ang kadustaan mo'y aking kadustaan.// Pagsilang mo, bunso, sa sangmaliwanag/ nang panahong ako'y di pa nagsasalat/ walang inadhika ang ina mong liyag/ kundi puspusin ka ng ginhawa't galak.*)

²² In J.P. Santos, *Buhay at mga Sinulat ni Plaridel* (Manila, 1931). Also Lumbera, pp. 36-45. The translations given here are based for the most part on Lumbera's.

More recent Tagalog films and popular magazine stories are shot through with scenes like this. Much to the dismay of modern writers and film critics, stories made for mass consumption invariably contain one or several scenes in which an old mother, perceiving her daughter's (or son's) desire to cut parental ties, embarks upon a long, tearful lament which attempts to make the daughter remember her childhood and the hardships experienced by her parents (particularly the mother) to ensure that the child grows up in a condition of *layaw*. *Layaw*, which is not easy to translate, means a comfortable, carefree upbringing, informed by love between parent and child.

In the *Sagot*, Del Pilar uses the notion of *layaw* in continuing the discourse on the Philippine past begun by Flores. Rizal's properly documented notions of a flourishing pre-Spanish past are given meaningful form in this way. Mother Spain talks about the wealth Filipinas was born into, her gold, minerals and abundant food which attracted merchants from neighbouring lands. Spain's role as mother was to raise Filipinas up in the proper way: to learn to love others as well as to develop her reason so that she could defend and properly use her wealth. The friars, having sworn before God 'to turn away from this world and turn down all manner of wealth', were sent in good faith as teachers. At this point there is a hint that the mother-child relationship is faulty. Mother Spain admits her mistake in entrusting her daughter to the friars. The theme of a child's faulty upbringing by a surrogate parent appears also in the *Historia Famosa* in Don Rubio's failure to treat Bernardo as his own son. Strongly reminiscent of Don Sancho's lament about his long lost son is Mother Spain's own lament about the friars' cruel treatment of her daughter Filipinas:

As your mother, I would like/ to remedy all these ills;/ but what can I do — I have grown old/ and poor and helpless.

The famous Legaspi and Salcedo/ and all the others in whom I put my faith/ as the ones who would take good care of you/ have departed and made us feel our loss.

It is thus necessary, my child,/ to learn to suffer and accept/ every affliction if from their slumber/ your children refuse to stir.

(*Ang lahat ng ito'y ninanais sana/ na malagyang lunas ng sinta mong ina;/ nguni paanhin mo, ngayo'y matanda na,/ hapo na sa hirap ako't walang kaya.// Ang mga balitang Legazpi't Salcedo/ at iba't iba pang inaasahan ko/ sa pagkakalinga ng tapat sa iyo,/ ngayon ay wala na't inulila tayo.// . . . Kaya kailangan, bunsong iniinrog,/ matutong magtiis iayon ang loob,/ sa madlang dalita, kung ayaw kumilos ang mga anak mo sa pagkakatulog.*)

Mother Spain continues with stories of her own past, the European experience under the friars. Del Pilar's readers would not have found this excursion into European history alien to their experience. *Awit* had freely drawn from European events, real or legendary, for their raw material. Del Pilar uses this fact to expand his readers' consciousness of contemporary political realities and possibilities. 'Spaniards, Frenchmen, Germans and people of other European nations' are pictured as having accepted the friars in good faith, and having been sucked dry as a result of their own naivete. The twenty-four stanza description of the friars' oppression of the European people parallels earlier accounts of the situation in the Philippines. The emphasis is on the imagery that evokes pity for the victims, an essential ingredient in *awit* that maintains the audience in a state of *damay*.

The fact that Del Pilar talks about Europe enables him to picture a solution to the Philippine problem. The time came when Europeans, in the midst of misery, hunger, fear and death, had 'heaven put it in their minds to confer and agree to come to one another's aid (*damay*)'. Plagued by the thought that their children would inherit their misery, they decided to clear the 'thorny path' they were treading. The next six stanzas describe the 'frightening' consequences of a people's anger unleashed. Again, the *awit* frame is indispensable to Del Pilar. His readers understood images of 'people's power' because of their familiarity with strikingly similar descriptions in *awit* of Christians fighting Moros. In the following stanzas, for example, we are reminded of the wanton destruction that Bernardo inflicted upon the forces of Emperor Carpio:

The people's vengeance was terrifying/ for nothing could hold back
their anger/ the monasteries were burned/ as though they were the
dens of vicious beasts.

The friars fought back, but what/ could shelter them from the
people's wrath!/ When the quiet sea raises a threat/ no heroic men
can hold back the onrush of waves.

*(Higanti ng baya'y kakila-kilabot/ walang pagsiyahan ang kanilang
poot,/ ang mga kombento'y kanilang sinunog/ inaring pugad ng
masamang hayop.// Prayle'y nanglalaban, nguni, alin kaya/ sa
galit ng bayan ang magiging kuta!/ any payapang dagat, pag
siyang nagbala/ ay walang bayaning makasasansala.)*

But this is the way other peoples took, cautions Mother Spain. All she can do for Filipinas is to relate her experience, to be passed on to the next generation. The solution will have to come from Filipinas' children — the youth — who must be awakened from the dream-state (a state of forgetfulness) in which the 'secret enemy's deceptive flattery' has cast them, causing them

to ignore their mother's tearful lament. The worst that can happen is that they will not show *utang na lo'ob* for the *layaw* she gave them:

Heaven forbid that such a curse should fall/ upon you children, my
precious child/ may they learn to look after you/ and learn to dry
your tears.

This is all that can be said in reply/ to your plaint by your crippled
mother, dear;/ your vessel is fragile: let not your children sleep/
for a tempest tosses in mid-sea.

(*Ilayo ng langit sa ganitong sumpa/ ang mga anak mo, bunsong
minumutya:/ sa iyo'y matuto ng pagkakalina/ matutong umampat
ng iyong pagluha./ Ito na nga lamang ang maisasagot/ ng salantang
ina sa hibik mo, irog:/ sasakyan mo'y gipo, huwag matutulog/ ang
mga anak mo't masigwa sa laot.*)

While it may be true that the poems of Flores and Del Pilar reflect the writers' 'ambivalent feelings toward the Mother Country',²³ it is more important to note that the bulk of their audience was brought up to respect Spanish authority and revere the friars as God's chosen representatives on earth. The propagandists who chose to express themselves in Tagalog could only go so far in probing the limits of the public's perceptions of their ties to Spain, attempting to stretch such ties to a breaking point by continually juxtaposing Philippine events and *awit* form. The final line of Del Pilar's poem consists of the familiar image, in Tagalog religious poetry, of a boat tossed by a storm in mid-sea. But unlike earlier poets, he does not celebrate the light or beacon that guides the boat to shore. It is neither the teachings of the friars nor the Virgin Mary, Star of the Sea. The poem is left open-ended. Half a decade later, a revolutionary secret society called *Kataastaasan Kagalanggalang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan* (The Highest and Most Honorable Society of the Sons of the Country), or Katipunan for short, would proclaim itself the light. In the writings of its founder, Andres Bonifacio, the Philippine past would again be discussed in the idiom of personal relationship and reciprocity, but in a logic that demanded revolution.

There is perhaps no personality in Philippine history as controversial as that of Andres Bonifacio. Some insist that he was a true man of the people, combining in his personality intelligence and patriotic courage.²⁴ Others play him down as an impatient hothead, a rabble-rouser who lacked the

²³ Lumbera, p. 251.

²⁴ This view has been best put forward by T. Agoncillo, *The Revolt of the Masses* (Quezon City, University of the Philippines, 1956).

military skills needed to win victories against Spain and the educational qualifications for national leadership.²⁵ I shall not contribute to the debate over his personality. What is more important is to understand why his writings, his utterances, led thousands of Filipinos to join the revolution and why, long after the cessation of hostilities, the images and symbols associated with his movement kept the spirit of independence alive among the common folk.

Bonifacio grew up in the world of *awit* poetry. As a young man, while not on the job as a petty clerk in a shipping company, he was an actor in Tagalog dramas. He was familiar with most of the *awit*-type literature and, as an actor, would have memorized large segments of them. His favourite work was the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*. According to the testimony of one of his companions, Bonifacio changed the names of places, scenes and mountains in his copy of the *Historia* to Tagalog names.²⁶ Although this text has not survived, we can more or less reconstruct the changes Bonifacio made. King Alfonso was Spain. The unfortunate Don Sancho and Jimena were mother and father Philipines. The envious and teacherous Don Rubio must have stood for the friars. Bernardo Carpio was the Filipino youth. All these characters stood in various terms of relationship to each other; the Moros signified the outside, hostile universe. The mountain in which Bernardo was imprisoned was Montalban, later to become a refuge of the Katipunan.²⁷

There are obvious limitations to interpreting a Spanish-based text written in the first half of the nineteenth century in terms of Philippine conditions in the 1890s. But Bonifacio was only too aware of the fact that his uneducated countrymen's awareness of the past was mediated by the *awit* form. Furthermore, he must have learned from Rizal's *El Filibusterismo*, if not from his own experience, that the *Historia Famosa* was highly popular among the 'folk' and that Bernardo Carpio had already been appropriated as a Tagalog hero. It seems to me that the *Historia Famosa* provided Bonifacio with an insight as to how to communicate the idea of separation from Spain to a mass audience. The formal correspondences between *awit* and Philippine events were not as important to him as the process, in the *awit*, through which an ambiguous configuration of personal relationships, of the type that Flores and Del Pilar had portrayed as existing among Spain, Filipinas and the friars, was resolved.

Before we turn to Bonifacio's writings, there are certain things we ought to bear in mind regarding the shape of the *Historia Famosa ni Bernardo Carpio*. First of all, the more or less continual presence of King Alfonso as the supreme

²⁵ See C. Quirino, *The Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (Ateneo de Manila, 1963) Historical introduction.

²⁶ Agoncillo, p. 67.

²⁷ On the significance of the 1895 Katipunan 'pilgrimage' to the cave, see Iletto, p.132.

authority-figure and patron enables the author of the *Historia Famosa* to test the limits of *utang na lo'ob* when this is challenged by the power of love. Not that *utang* and love are contradictory forces; ideally they coexist and bring permanence to a relationship. But in the case of Sancho, Jimena's beauty had overpowered him like a dazzling light and his *lo'ob* was changed. The couple do not reflect upon the consequences of their acts as they meet in the tower and seal their relationship. Although they are committing treachery toward the King, who has bestowed so many favours on them (and he repeatedly enumerates these favours), their being in a state of mutual *damay* makes possible the act of breaking ties of *utang* to the King. Taking up a small portion of the *awit*, the tragic love story nevertheless suffuses the whole with meaning, standing as a 'lost Eden' to the episodes that follow.

The above story constitutes the past which Bernardo, separated from his parents, is unaware of as he grows up. The various manifestations of his enormous strength and his exploits against the Moros occur within a framework of relationships with a false father, Rubio, and a stepfather, the King. His lack of self-control is a sign of discontinuity in his childhood experience. Nothing, for example, disorients him more than the discovery that Rubio is not his true father. When he later fights the Moros on behalf of his stepfather the King, his victories are meaningless to him. Moreover, he still manifests the uncontrolledness of his energy. Prodded by an agitated *lo'ob*, all he asks as a reward from the King is the truth about his parents' identity. His request refused, he angrily repudiates his ties of loyalty and *utang* to the King and goes off to discover the truth 'by force' (*hanaping pilit*).

Much of Bernardo's behaviour is explained by the disjunction between him and the past. The Sancho-Jimena story remains the only realm of meaning in the *awit* until, toward the end, Bernardo is reunited with his parents. During the interval, Sancho's laments from his dark prison cell constitute the voice of the past; when Bernardo finds his father, it is 'as if he heard this lament'. But what pushes events to this conclusion? As Sancho himself says in a lament, his son Bernardo never experienced *layaw*. Without this experience of rootedness in a familial relationship, without the experience of a mother's love and the training in control of *lo'ob* given by a father,²⁸ his innate strength could not be properly directed. He was a child without roots. Bernardo's story is less the working out of a plot or a translation of motives into action, than the imaging of an ambiguous state — a son's lack of the experience of *layaw* — and its resolution. Bernardo's almost 'irrational' determination to know his parents is not found in the Spanish sources, where the discovery is purely by accident. In fact, the *awit*'s author omits most of the lengthy Spanish accounts of battles and concentrates on Bernardo's search. The final

²⁸ T. Kalaw, *Cinco Reglas de Nuestra Moral Antigua* (Manila, Bureau of Print, 1947) p. 4.

dialogue between father and son, and the marriage of Sancho and Jimena that follows, link past and present and make Bernardo whole.

To Bonifacio and his fellow revolutionists, the Filipinos of his generation — ie. the youth who, said del Pilar, lived in a dream-world — could only be mobilized to rise against Spain when their conceptions of *utang na lo'ob* to Mother Spain were undermined. But for a society which is held together precisely by such ties, the dissolution of a relationship had to be occasioned by the creation of a new one. The way Bernardo Carpio took was the perfect model of a solution.

In an historical broadsheet, *Ang Dapat Mabatid ng mga Tagalog* (What the Tagalogs should Know),²⁹ published in 1896, Bonifacio reveals his debt to the Propagandists' views of a flourishing pre-Spanish past. Spain, attracted by such beauty and wealth, came and allied herself to Filipinas. Their bond, solemnized in the 'Blood Compact' between King Sikatuna and the representative of Spain, Legaspi, is not unlike the relationship between Don Sancho and King Alfonso. Using images which could very well have been inspired by the *Historia Famosa*, Bonifacio portrays the early Filipinos fighting Chinese and Dutch invaders out of loyalty to Spain, only to be rewarded with treachery instigated by the friars. Filipinos were 'made blind', their character debased, and when they 'dared to ask even the slightest compassion, the invariable reply was exile, separation from the company of [their] beloved children, spouses and old parents'. The parallel here with the content of Sancho's lament in prison is unmistakable. Yet Bonifacio need not have been using the *Historia Famosa* as a model. The imagery of grief and separation, and the *damay* evoked by such, are elements of Tagalog awareness of past events. The nature of Spanish rule is, in Bonifacio's piece, brought out not in the form of irony or direct abuse but in the following description of grief:

. . . Our peace is now disturbed by the moans and lamentations, the sighs and grief of innumerable orphans, widows and parents of compatriots wronged (*anyaya*) by the Spanish usurpers; now we are deluged by the streaming tears of a mother whose son was put to death, by the wails of tender children orphaned by cruelty and whose every tear that falls is like molten lead that sears the painful wound of our suffering hearts . . .

The English translation does not adequately demonstrate the softening-and-directing-of-*lo'ob* effect of such a stream of images and sounds, which are even more effective in Bonifacio's poems. Within this context, Bonifacio then calls on the people to follow the way (*landas*) revealed by the light of truth. 'The time has come' for the people to show that they have feelings, honour,

²⁹ Published in T. Agoncillo, *The Writings and Trial of Andres Bonifacio* (Manila, 1963) pp. 68-69. The translations of Bonifacio's writings used here are based on Agoncillo's.

sense of shame (*hiya*) and *damay*. 'The time has come for the Tagalogs to know the origins of their hardships.' To paraphrase Bonifacio in terms of the young Bernardo's experience, it is time for the people to become one in *lo'ob* by knowing the truth about themselves and their past. To attain this knowledge and to act upon it entails renouncing the traditional tie with 'stepmother' Spain.

The status of the 'people' as youngest child (*bunso*) in Bonifacio's discourse shows a striking similarity to that of Bernardo Carpio. Owing to the friars' influence, the youngest child has grown up under a false parent, Spain. He has no awareness of relationship with his true mother, Filipinas, in a time of *ginhawa*, a paradise-like state of comfort and security and a condition akin to *layaw*. Seeing the people in this light Bonifacio, in his best known poem, *Pag-ibig sa Tinubuang Bayan* (lit. 'Love for the Country of One's Roots'),³⁰ seeks precisely to evoke in his audience an awareness of a common past by transposing personal memories of *layaw* to a 'national' key. A few stanzas from the poem illustrate this:

Ah, this is the Mother country of our birth/ she is the very mother
who first opened our eyes/ to the delightful brightness of the sun/
which brings warmth to the weak body.

To her we owe (*utang*) the first kiss/ of the wind that gives relief/
to the ailing heart that is drowning/ in the deep well of misfortune
and suffering.

Entwined with this is love of country/ everything dear to the
memory/ from a happy and carefree childhood/ to when the body
is brought to the grave.

The bygone days of joy/the future that is hoped/ when the slaves
will be freemen/ where can this be found but in one's native land?

Each tree and each branch/ of her fields and forest joyful to
behold/ it is enough to see them to remember/ the mother and
the loved one, happiness now gone.

(Ay! ito'y ang Ynang bayang tinubuan/ siya'y ina't tangi na
kinamulatan/ ng kawiliwiling liwanag ng araw/ ng nagbigay init sa
lunong katawan.//

Sa kania'y utang ang unang pagtanggap/ ng simoy ng hanging
nagbibigay lunas/ sa inis na puso na sisingasingap/ sa balong
malalim ng siphayo't hirap.//

Kalakip din nito'y pag ibig sa Bayan/ ang lahat ng lalong sa
gunita'y mahal/ mula sa masaya't gasong kasanggulan/ hanggang
sa katawa'y mapa sa libingan.//

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 72-4.

*Ang nanga karaang panahon ng aliw/ ang inaasahang araw na
darating/ ng pagkatimawa ng mga alipin/ liban pa sa bayan saan
tatanghalin?//*

*At ang balang kahoy at ang balang sanga/ na parang nia't gubat
na kaaya-aya/ sukat ang makita't sa sa ala-ala/ ang ina't ang guiliw
lumipas na saya.)*

Even in the English translation, Bonifacio's poem illustrates the point of intersection of personal experience and 'nationalism'. Few of his countrymen had a notion of 'Filipino' as one people. This is partly explained by the absence of written historical traditions that could be transmitted beyond the *barrio*. Bonifacio does not even bother to relate any of the hundreds of local or regional revolts that took place during the three centuries of Spanish rule. I suspect that, assuming he was aware of them, he would not have found them relevant to the drama of separation from Spain that he helped portray; the 'national' drama for him begins after 1872. But even then, to confine himself to describing post-1872 repression was not enough. Bonifacio knew that what every Filipino cherished were personal memories of *layaw*. Writing in the medium of poetry, he is able, as in the passages quoted above, to juxtapose the concept of 'Mother Country' and images of wholeness with one's parents or loved ones.

The second part of the above poem consists largely of a call to action to liberate the suffering Mother Country from her oppressed condition. Bonifacio begins this part with another evocation of 'memory':

*How unfortunate it is to be separated from Country!/ even memory
is in sorrow's embrace/ nothing matters but the desire/ to see the
land which brought him forth.*

*(Sa aba ng abang mawalay sa Bayan!/ gunita may laging sakbibi ng
lumbay/ walang ala-ala't inaasam asam/ kung di ang makita'y
lupang tinubuan.)*

It has been mentioned in connection with the *Historia Famosa* that noble, selfless deeds are the products of a hero's constant awareness of past relationships. The image of past moments of wholeness propels him to create the future in these terms. Having kindled in his audience a feeling for Country as mother and loved one, Bonifacio then dwells on the theme of separation and how the gap between past and present can be closed by a heroic act. To have compassion and *utang na lo'ob* for Mother Country means participating in the act of freeing her, and by this one becomes 'Filipino'.

The effectiveness of Bonifacio's writings can be attributed to their ability to evoke *damay* for the country, which is personified and given a past. The myth of Bernardo Carpio is translated into the history of the Tagalog people. Not only was Bernardo Carpio the man in the mountain who would come down to free his people from oppressors, but as Bonifacio and his compatriots in the Katipunan saw it, each lowly *indio* could be Bernardo Carpio. The latter's story, well known and loved by all, was being played out on the 'national' level. Bonifacio's writings were no more than signs leading individuals who, it must again be stressed, lived in the world of *awit*, to come to their own conclusions about the way the story should end.

In the poem *Katapusang Hibik ng Pilipinas* (Filipinas' Final Lament)³¹ Bonifacio, for the first time, has Filipinas' children speak and draw a close to the mother-daughter dialogue established by Flores and Del Pilar:

At the horizon, Mother, has risen/ the sun of Tagalog fury;/ for
three centuries we kept it/ in the sea of woes wrought by poverty.
Your children's hut had nothing to hold it up/ during the terrible
storm of pains and troubles; all in Filipinas are of one heart —
you are no longer a mother to us.

(Sumikat na Ina sa sinisilangan/ ang araw ng poot ng katagalugan,
tatlong daang taong aming iningatan/ sa dagat ng dusa ng karalitaan.//
Walang isinuhay kaming iyong anak/ sa bagyong masasal ng dalita't
hirap,/ tiisa ang puso nitong Pilipinas/ at ikaw ay di na Ina naming
lahat.)

The rejection of a false mother — Spain — parallels Bernardo Carpio's denunciation of his stepfather, the King, and the beginning of the journey to restore his wholeness lost soon after birth. The absence of *layaw* that sets him on this course of action appears, too, on a 'national' scale:

Filipinas has received nothing/ by way of comfort (*layaw*) from
her mother, only pain —/ our sufferings grew: revenues for this
and that,/ charges made and taxes levied left and right.

(Wala nang namana itong Pilipinas/ na layaw sa Ina kundi pawang
hirap;/ tiis ay pasulong, patente'y nagkalat,/rekargo't impuwesto'y
nagsalasalabat.)

To Bonifacio, the process of dissolving an old bond and creating a new one demands a release of the people's energies in the right direction. As he describes it:

³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 75-7; also Lumbera, pp. 46-7. The translations are Lumbera's.

In the world will now explode/ the sound of guns and cannons loud
like thunder,/ the furious storm when blood will flow/ while
bullets and shells contend among themselves.

*(Sa sangmaliwanag ngayon ay sasabog/ ang barila't kanyong katulad
ay kulog/, ang sigwang masasal sa dugong aagos/ ng kanilang bala
na magpapamook.)*

Such an event was not unfamiliar to Bonifacio's audience. When Bernardo Carpio finally discovered the names of his true parents, his first act was to unleash his tremendous power to frighten France into submission to her former vassal, Spain.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

Southeast Asian Historical Writing

In keeping with the intention of this book, the works listed below are those written by Southeast Asians about their past for a domestic audience, and cited as such in the book. They are divided primarily according to area, with works from Indonesia/Malaysia subdivided into Javanese, Makassarese, Malay and Modern Indonesian. Within those categories the works are listed according to date of original composition. In this way it is hoped that the bibliography will provide both information on the works cited in the text and a guide to the way in which particular traditions have developed.

For most of the early manuscript sources, the dates of original composition are doubtful and sometimes controversial. We do not wish to enter these controversies. We merely record what we take to be the dominant prevailing opinion, with a question mark if appropriate, in order to have a ranking order.

Although authorship is recorded wherever it is known, the most commonly used title is the first piece of information given for early manuscript texts. When we reach those 'modern' works written with the printing press in mind, we place the author's name first in the customary fashion.

As elsewhere in this book, we have endeavoured to follow the system of romanization currently most favoured in the country in question.

CAMBODIA

- 1796 '*Ang Eng*' fragment. The only extant part of a work allegedly presented to King Rama I of Siam (1782-1809) by his Cambodian protégé, Ang Eng (1794-96). The text covers the period 1346 to the mid-15th century and exists only in a Thai translation, published as 'Phongsāwadān lawek' [Lovek Chronicle] in the series *Prachum Phongsāwadān* [Collected Chronicles], Vol. IV, Bangkok, 1915 (and subsequent editions). A French version of this Thai text appears as an appendix to G. Coedès, 'Essai de classification des documents historiques cambodgiens conservés à la Bibliothèque de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient', *BEFEO*, Vol. 18(9), September 1918, pp. 15-28.
- 1818 '*Nong*' Chronicle. Composed by Oknha Vongsa Sarapech (Nong), an official at the court of King Chan (1806-35), this text covers the period 1414-1800. It served as the basis for the French translation of Francis Garnier (*Journal Asiatique*, 1871-72). A Thai translation was first published in 1869, and republished as 'Phongsawadān khamen' [Cambodian Chronicle] in *Prachum Phongsawadān*, Vol. I, Bangkok, 1914 (and subsequent editions). The 'Nong' chronicle represents the sparser, and often more accurate, of the two Cambodian chronicle traditions. The other is associated with the 20th century palace official Thiounn (see 1934, below).

- 1856 *Sastra Ibaok robakhsat* . . . [Book about the royal lineage]. An unpublished verse chronicle composed in Baray, north central Cambodia, treating events in the first half of the 19th century; recopied in 1951 and 1970.
- 1878 '*Nupparot*' *Chronicle*. Composed at the behest of a Cambodian prince, Nupparot, during the reign of Norodom (1860-1904). Its treatment of events from 1414 to 1800 is based on Nong, but the text also includes legendary material covering earlier events, as well as data from the period 1800 to 1866. See Dik Keam (1975), below. The text was translated into Thai as *Ratchaphongsāwādān krung kamputcha* [Royal chronicle of Cambodia], Bangkok, 1916 (repr. 1969).
- 1934 *Brah raj bangsavatar krung kambujadhipati*. [Royal Chronicle of the country of Kampuchea]. Manuscript in the Buddhist Institute, Phnom Penh, microfilmed, in turn, by the Centre for Far Eastern Studies in Tokyo, where microfilms may be obtained. This manuscript represents the 'Thiounn' tradition of Cambodian historiography, because of the association of this official with versions compiled in the royal palace in 1903-07 and in 1934. It is far more detailed than the 'Nong' chronicle, and includes legendary material as well as material dealing with the reigns of Norodom and Sisowath (1904-27). Portions of this manuscript were recently translated into French by Mak Phoeun and Khin Sok in theses for University of Paris (IV), 1975. Predecessors of the 'Thiounn' tradition extend back into the late 19th century, when they served as the basis for the translations in Jean Moura, *Le Royaume de Cambodge*, Paris, 1883 and Adhemard Leclère, *L'Histoire du Cambodge*, Paris, 1914. The first printed version in Khmer is Eng Suth (1969), below.
- 1949 *Rajabangsavatar Brah Sisowath Monivong* [Chronicle of King Sisowath Monivong] and *Rajabangsavatar Brah Norodom Sihanouk* [Chronicle of King Norodom Sihanouk]. A continuation of the 1934 manuscript. A manuscript consisting of 934 pages of lightly ruled foolscap, written in ink by at least two scribes, the first responsible for pp. 1-34 (which are almost illegible), and the second — or the others — responsible for the rest. Headnotes in pencil scattered through the manuscript divide it into 24 sections, averaging slightly less than 40 pages each. The headnotes read: 'A true copy of the original' and bear an illegible signature. A marginal note on p. 194 reads 'Begin copying here 1/9/49', but there is no calligraphic gap at this point, and the manuscript ends by describing events of 9 December 1949, so the entire text was presumably copied in that year.

- 1969 Eng Suth, *Akkasar mahaboros khmaer* [Documents about Cambodian Heroes], Phnom Penh. Based on the 'Thiounn' tradition, this book uses various manuscripts in an uncritical fashion.
- 1975 Dik Keam (ed.), *Bangsavatar khmaer: sastra sluk rut vat Setbor* [Khmer Chronicle: palm-leaf manuscript from Wat Setubor], Phnom Penh. The only printed Cambodian text of the 'Nupparot' version of the chronicle.

INDONESIA/MALAYSIA

JAVANESE

- 1365 *Nāgarakṛtāgama* [The Kingdom Ordered According to Holy Tradition]. Written in verse by Prapanca, it describes the realm of Majapahit during the reign of Rajasanagara, gives a brief dynastic history, and depicts the regions visited by the poet who accompanied the king on his journeys — hence the original title *Désawarnana* [The Description of the Regions].

The only extant manuscript, dated 1740, was kept in the Library of the University of Leiden (cod. 5023-V) after its discovery in Lombok in 1894. On the occasion of the first visit to the Netherlands by an Indonesian President, in 1970, the manuscript was presented by Queen Juliana to President Suharto. It is now in the Museum Pusat in Jakarta.

J.L.A. Brandes published the text in Balinese characters in VBG, no. 54 (1904). H. Kern made a romanized text, with notes and Dutch translation, published in various issues of *BKI* (1903-1914). N.J. Krom, *Het Oud-Javaansche Lofdicht Nagarakrtagama van Prapanca (1365 A.D.)*, 's-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1919, is a reprint of Kern's work with additional notes. Th. Pigeaud, *Java in the Fourteenth Century, A Study in Cultural History*, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1960-63, contains a new romanized text edition (Vol. I), notes (Vol. II), an almost word-for-word English translation (Vol. III), and copious commentaries (Vol. IV). References in this volume are to Pigeaud's edition, though the romanization and translation do not always follow Pigeaud.

- 16th Century *Pararaton* [The Book of Kings]. The only Old Javanese work which approaches a chronicle, it contains the story of the East Javanese kingdoms of Singhasari and Majapahit until 1481.

There exist about ten extant manuscripts, the oldest of which, dated 1600, is at the Museum Pusat, Jakarta.

J.L.A. Brandes, *Pararaton (Ken Arok), Het Boek der Koningen van Tumapel en van Majapahit* (VBG, no. 49), 1896, provides a romanized text based on the three Jakarta manuscripts, a Dutch translation and copious notes. N.J. Krom revised the work in VBG, no. 62 (1920). References in this volume are to Brandes.

- 17th Century *Babad Tanah Jawi* [Chronicle of Java]. This account of the history of Java from Adam to the first quarter of the 19th century, as seen from the court of Mataram, though incorporating many elements from local *babad*, appears to have been rewritten a number of times. The earliest codification is probably from the 17th century.

The original *babad* are written in verse. One version has been published in Javanese characters by the Balai Pustaka, *Babad Tanah Djawi* (31 parts) Batavia, 1931-41. A shorter prose version was made by Kertapraja in the second half of the 19th century, and edited in Javanese characters by J.J. Meinsma, *Babah Tanah Djawi, in proza, Javaansche geschiedenis loopende tot het jaar 1647 der Javaansche jaartelling*, 2 vols., 's-Gravenhage, 1874 and 1877. J.L. Olthof provides a romanized text, *Poenika Serat Babad Tanah Jawi wiwit saking Nabi Adam doemoegi ing taoen 1647*, 's-Gravenhage, 1941, as well as a translation in Dutch. References in this volume are to Olthof.

- 1773-74 *Babad Balambangan* [Chronicle of Balambangan], LOr 2185 in the collection of the library of the Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden. Contains an account in verse of the Dutch conquest of Balambangan and the Malang-Lumajang region.

The text consists of a manuscript of 192 pages in Javanese script, copied from a manuscript in the collection of what is now the Museum Pusat, Jakarta (manuscript Koninklijk Bataviaasch Genootschap no. 63). About three-quarters of this text was published by Balai Pustaka, again in Javanese script, in 1936, under the title *Cariyosipun Tanah Balambangan Jamanipun Wong Agung Wilis* [The Story of Balambangan in the Time of Wong Agung Wilis]. Omitted was the last part of the text, dealing with the Dutch conquest of Malang and Lumajang.

- 1826 *Babad Bayu* [Chronicle of Bayu], LOr 4090 in the collection of the library of the Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden. A verse history of the Dutch expeditions against the Bayu insurgents in 1771-72. An unpublished manuscript, consisting of 147 pages in Javanese script.

- c. 1830? *Babad Balambangan*, LOr 4087 in the collection of the Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden. A dynastic history in prose of Balambangan, which was added to and given a verse form over the following 40 years. An unpublished manuscript, consisting of 55 pages in Javanese script.
- post-1830 *Suluk Gaṭoloco* [Hymn of Gaṭoloco]. Written from a Javanese mystical viewpoint, this gives an anti-Islamic interpretation of Java's history. Published in Ph. van Akkeren, *Een Gedrocht en toch de Volmaakte Mens* [A Monster, yet the Perfect Man], Utrecht, 1951.
- 1843-47 LOr 4089 in the collection of the Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden. An account in verse of conditions in Banyuwangi and of Dutch military movements against north Bali. Also contains passages on wars waged by the prophets Dawud and Mohammad. An unpublished manuscript of 43 pages in Javanese script.
- c. 1849 *Babad Basuki* [Chronicle of Besuki], LOr 2186 in the collection of the Rijksuniversiteit, Leiden. An account in verse of the Madurese settlement of the Besuki region. An unpublished manuscript of 47 pages in Javanese script, copied from a manuscript in the Museum Pusat, Jakarta (manuscript KBG no. 64).
- c. 1870? *Sĕrat Kala Tida* [Poem of a Time of Darkness]. Written by Raden Ngabei Ronggawarsita, and probably the most widely known Javanese poem. Describes an age of tension between the pursuit of virtue and wisdom and the scramble for material benefits. Printed numerous times, notably by Tan Khoen Swie in Kediri (first ed. 1927, 2nd ed. 1931).

MAKASSARESE

Sinrili'na Kappala' Tallumbatua (Tale of the Three Ships]. A Makassar village tale about Arung Palakka and the Makassar War, recited by a story-teller with the aid of a stringed instrument (*keso-keso*).

It is difficult to determine when this tale was first recited among the Makassar villagers. The version used for the paper in this volume was written down in 1936 in Jongaya, Goa, at the behest of A.A. Cense, then the Dutch government officer in charge of the study of South-west and Southeast Sulawesi languages and culture. Unfortunately, the names of the story-teller (*pasinrili'*) and his village are no longer known, because Cense's personal notes and the registration lists of the manuscripts in Makassar were destroyed during the Japanese Occupation.

This text is listed as Ms.no.182 in the Institute of Culture of South and Southeast Sulawesi in Ujung Pandang and bears the subtitle: 'A Shortened Contents of the *Sinrili'na Kappala' Tallumbatuna*'. Another copy is held by Prof. Dr A.A. Cense in The Hague.

Abd. Rahim Daeng Mone, one of several people who were hired by Cense to transcribe this *sinrili* while it was being recited, reports that only a few repetitious sentences which occurred in sequence were omitted during transcription. These omissions are indicated in the text by the Dutch 'enz.' (etc.) and can easily be filled by referring to what was said in the sentences immediately preceding.

One other text exists in Ujung Pandang, but is not readily available. The present owner of this text admits to having used Ms.no.182 as the main text, adding his own embellishments to the tale without changing its substance. It was this revised text which was used for his highly popular radio performances in Ujung Pandang in 1974-75.

MALAY

- 15th Century? *Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai* [Chronicle of the Kings of Pasai]. The story of Samudera/Pasai (northern Sumatra) until its conquest by Majapahit in the mid-14th century.

The only extant manuscript was copied for Raffles in 1814 from a text then in the possession of the *bupati* of Demak. The *jawi* text was printed by Edouard Dulaurier as *La Chronique du Royaume de Pasey*, Paris, 1849 and a romanized version by J.P. Mead, 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai, romanized text', *JSBRAS*, Vol. 66, 1914, pp. 1-55.

An English translation, together with an improved romanization of the Malay text, was published by A.H. Hill as 'Hikayat Raja-Raja Pasai', *JMBRAS*, Vol. 33 (2), 1961. All citations in this book are from Hill.

- 16th Century *Hikayat Banjar* [Banjarasin Chronicle]. The major part of this text, which describes the origins of the Sultanate of Banjarasin, appears to have been composed in the reign of the first Islamic ruler, Sultan Suryanu'llah.

Extant manuscripts are all 19th century copies, the earliest being a British Museum copy (MS. Add. 12392) made at Raffles' request in 1815 but acquired by Crawford.

A.A. Cense, *De Kroniek van Bandjarmasin*, Sandpoort, 1928, provided summaries in Dutch and detailed criticisms of the two main recensions. This work is superseded by J.J. Ras, *Hikajat Banjar. A Study in Malay Historiography* (Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Bibliotheca Indonesica 1), The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1968. Ras provides a romanized Malay text, English translation, and critical apparatus.

- 1612? *Sejarah Melayu* [conventionally translated 'The Malay Annals']. This account of the Melaka Sultanate appears to have been rewritten a number of times, notably at the Johor court in 1612 by Tun Seri Lanang.

About 30 manuscript versions exist in libraries, though none pre-date the early 19th century. The best-known is Raffles MS.18, whose introduction states that it was written in 1021 A.H. (A.D. 1612). A romanized text of Raffles 18 was published by R.O. Winstedt, *JMBRAS*, Vol. 16 (3), 1938, and an English translation by C.C. Brown, *JMBRAS*, Vol. 25 (2 & 3), 1952.

Citations in this book are from Brown. A shorter version was better known in the 19th century, having been edited by Abdullah Munshi and published in Singapore in 1831, and given a partial English translation by John Leyden (London, 1821). This version was once assumed to have been originally written about 1536, but Roolvink (BKI, no. 123, pp. 302-24) has argued that it is later than the 1612 version of Raffles MS.18.

- c. 1630 *Hikayat Aceh* [Aceh Chronicle]. This is a work in praise of the powerful Acehnese Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-36), composed during his lifetime. The oldest extant text, now at Leiden, appears to date from the late 17th century or even earlier.

Teuku Iskandar, *De Hikajat Atjeh* (VKI 26), 's-Gravenhage, Martinus Nijhoff, 1958, provides a full romanized text with notes, and a detailed summary in Dutch.

- c. 1640 *Bustan al-Salatin* [Garden of Kings]. Written by the Gujarat-born Nur al-Din al-Raniri at the court of Aceh during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Thani (1637-41), this is an encyclopedic work which includes substantial chapters on the history of Melaka and Aceh.

The earliest extant texts appear to be two copied for Raffles in the early 19th century. No complete text has ever been published, although there is a scholarly romanization of the chapter on Aceh: Nuru'd-din al-Raniri, *Bustanu's-Salatin* Bab II, Fasal 13 (ed. T. Iskandar), Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1966.

- c. 1670 *Sya'ir Perang Mengkasar* [Rhymed Chronicle of the Makassar War], written in Malay verse by Entji' Amin, official writer of the Sultan of Goa (Makassar), describing the fall of Makassar to Dutch-led troops.

Two 18th century texts exist, used by C. Skinner for his definitive edition of the romanized text with English translation, *Sja'ir Perang Mengkasar* (VKI 40), The Hague, M. Nijhoff, 1963.

- 17th Century? *Hikayat Hang Tuah*. An heroic epic of incidents in the life of the Malay warrior Hang Tuah, it may have been written down from earlier oral versions on a number of occasions during the 17th century. The first definite reference to a text occurs in 1736 (Werndly), while the oldest extant text is dated 1758, now in Leiden.
- The published texts include a 4 vol. *jawi* edition by W.G. Shellabear, Singapore, Malaya Publishing House, 1908, reprinted 1959 and 1963; a romanized edition of Balai Pustaka, Batavia, 1924, reprinted Jakarta 1948 and 1956; and a romanized edition by Kassim Ahmad, Kuala Lumpur, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 1964, reprinted 1966, 1968, and 1973. The only translations are in German, by D.R. Brandstetter in 1894 and H. Overbeck in 1922.
- c. 1770 *Hikayat Nakhoda Muda*, a biography of a pepper-trader written by his son 'La-uddin at the request of the British resident of Laye, West Sumatra. English translation by W. Marsden, *Memoirs of a Malayan Family*, London, Oriental Translation Fund, 1830 — Johnson reprint, New York, 1968. Romanized Malay text and Dutch translation published by G.W.J. Drewes, *De Biografie van een Minangkabausen Peperhandelaar in de Lampongs* (VKI 36), 's-Gravenhage, M. Nijhoff, 1961.
- 1843 Munshi Abdullah bin Abdul Kadir, *Hikayat Abdullah* [The story of Abdullah]. Originally written 1840-43 as an autobiography, revised and lithographed at the Mission Press, Singapore, 1849. English translation by A.H. Hill, 'The Hikayat Abdullah', *JMBRAS*, Vol. 28 (3), 1955.
- 1847 Raja Ali Haji, *Sya'ir Sultan Abdul Muluk* [The Rhymed Poem of Sultan Abdul Muluk]. Based on a Persian original, it was first published by Roorda van Eysinga in *TNI*, Vol. 9, 1847, and later republished as a separate volume in Batavia, 1858.
- 1847 Raja Ali Haji, *Gurindam Duabelas* [The Twelve Rhymed Advices]. Dutch translation by E. Netscher, 'De Twaalf Spreukgedichten', *TBG*, Vol. 2, 1853, pp. 11-32.
- 1851 Raja Ali Haji, *Bustān al-Kātibīn li'l-Sibyāni al-Mut'ālimīn* [A Children's Guide to Writing]. Lithographed in 1858 and used in Singapore and Johor schools.
- 1857 Raja Ali Haji, *Thamarat al-Mahammah* [The Benefits of Official Duties]. Lithographed Lingga 1886-87. A practical manual in three parts, describing the correct procedure for the appointment of a ruler and his advisers, the establishment of a legal system, and how a ruler should conduct himself.

- 1857? Raja Ali Haji, *Mukaddimah fi intizām waṣā'if al-malik khusūsan ilā mala' wa ṣuḥbān wa ikhwān. Al-riwayah mempersembahkan hidayat ini akan jadi peringatan keHadrat al-Marhum Yangdipertuan Muda Raja Ali* [Introduction to the Systematic Arrangement of the Duties of the King especially concerning the Nobles, the Companions and Fellow Men. An account offered as a wise counsel to be a memorial to His Excellency the late Yang Dipertuan Muda Raja Ali]. Written soon after the Yang Dipertuan's death in 1857, and lithographed Lingga 1887, it is a book of advice to the ruler.
- 1865 Raja Ali Haji, *Silsilah Melayu dan Bugis dan sekalian Raja-rajanya* [Genealogy of Malay and Bugis Princes]. Published Singapore, Maṭba'at al-Iman, 1911, and reprinted Johor Bahru, by royal command, 1956.
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- c. 1869 Raja Ali Haji, *Kitab Pengetahuan Bahasa* [Book of Malay Language (and behaviour)]. An unfinished dictionary-like work, which reached only the first 6 letters although filling 466 pages. Never published.
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THE PHILIPPINES

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This is the original work which José Rizal annotated, using a rare copy in the British Museum which he copied out by hand. An English translation by Henry E.J. Stanley with annotations had been published by the Hakluyt Society in 1868, under the title, *The Philippine Islands, Moluccas, Siam, Cambodia, Japan, and China, at the close of the sixteenth century*. Rizal made use of this edition in some of his annotations to his own, which was the first Spanish edition to appear after the original: *Sucesos de las Islas Filipinas, por el Doctor Antonio de Morga. Obra publicada en Méjico el año de 1609 nuevamente sacada a luz y anotada por José Rizal y precedida de un prólogo del Prof. Fernando Blumentritt*, Paris, Garnier, 1890. Subsequent editions have appeared in Spanish by W.E. Retana (1909) and in English by James S. Cummins in 1971, as well as reprints of the Rizal Spanish edition and the Stanley English translation.

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THAILAND

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- 13th century *Đại Việt Sử Ký* [The Vietnamese Annals]. It would appear that Lê Văn Hưu 'edited' or 'revised' [*chỉnh*] an existing history. Lê Tắc implies that the history in question was Trần Tấn's *Việt Chí*. Trần Tấn may be the 'Trần Chu Phổ' mentioned in the Vietnamese annals under the date of 1251; he was an official in Trần Thái-tôn's court and would have been Hưu's near contemporary.

Lê Văn Hưu's revision was edited by Ngô Sĩ Liên in the 15th century, and that in turn became part of the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư* [TT], the consolidated annalistic history of Vietnam compiled at the end of the 17th century. Liên had Hưu's text in front of him, for he addresses himself to some of Hưu's comments. Liên also added information about the period before Triệu Đà's reign and supplied chronological details concerning the reign. The TT states that Hưu was ordered to begin his history with Triệu Đà, and he probably wrote a biography.

The basic historiographical study of Lê Văn Hưu is by Professor Tatsuro Yamamoto, 'The Yueh-shih-lueh and the Ta-yueh shih-chi, a bibliographical and historiographical comparison', *Tōyō Gakko*, Vol. 32 (4), 1950, pp. 53-76. A copy of the *Đại Việt Sử Ký Toàn Thư*, which is in itself a copy of the Kong-yon-kim Library text, is available at the Tōyō Bunko. Professor Trần Văn Giáp has an analysis of the relationship between the relevant texts in *Nghiên Cứu Lịch Sử*, No. 63, 1964, pp. 5-13.

Another text, the *Việt Sử Lược* [VSL], deserves consultation too. The VSL was probably written in the second half of the 14th century, and Professor Yamamoto suspects that it was confiscated by the Ming occupying forces early in the 15th century and remained unedited in China. This text may be very close to the shape of Hư's history; for example, the VSL gives 971 as the date of a Sung proclamation as did Hư, and it was left to Ngô Sĩ Liên to correct the date to '980'. Also, Hư's treatment of Triệu Đà seems to be reflected in the account of the ruler contained in the VSL, including providing him with an imperial title.

An important part of Lê Văn Hư's 'revision' may have consisted of incorporating materials from Chinese sources in order to support one of his assertions, revealed in his comments, that Vietnamese rulers were Chinese-style 'emperors'. Exactly how much Chinese material Hư incorporated cannot be established, but it is significant that the VSL refers to the two visits to Triệu Đà by the Han envoy, Lu Chia. This information could only have come from Han sources, and this is the information that justified Hư's eulogistic comment on Triệu Đà as founder of the Vietnamese empire. Another instance of his use of Chinese sources is revealed in his comment of 981, when he refers to the capture of two Chinese officers during the Sung invasion. The preceding narrative, drawn from Chinese sources, does not mention the capture, but the event is verified by a passage in Li Tao's *Hsü Tzŭ-chih t'ung-chien ch'ang-pien* in connection with a Sung mission to Lê Hoàn in 986, when the repatriation of the captured officers was requested. Hư must have decided to mention the capture in his comment of 981 in order to emphasize Lê Hoàn's achievements in defeating the Sung. All of this was consistent with Hư's purpose of validating the Trần dynasty's conviction that Chinese emperors in the past had not been aggrieved by the independent status of their southern 'vassals'. The most eloquent defence of the enduring vitality of Vietnamese court protocol was provided by Chinese authors who described the actual conduct of diplomacy and the observance of local customs when Chinese envoys were being received.

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